

METRO

VOL. 12 NO. 2

home

& Entertaining

ZAMBAWOOD

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of a natural enclave

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A portfolio
of dreamy
vacation homes

REFRESH 100

design
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SUMMER TRENDS

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The Vacation Home: Fantasy Versus Reality



PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

WORKING ON THIS ISSUE brought back many memories of my own childhood holidays, and as anyone who has gone on a family vacation knows, it's a mixed bag of tricks. My maternal grandfather loved nothing more than an out-of-town weekend jaunt. He was not too fond of logistics though, and it fell upon my responsible and dutiful mother to orchestrate all the myriad details of packing up all the necessities for a seamless weekend getaway. Now that I have the distance of time, I can still remember my mom's dedicated efforts to make our vacations pleasant and relaxing, and I also appreciate my grandfather's longing to bask in a family haven. His love of escaping, even for just a few days, may be his strongest legacy, as I am now madly addicted to traveling, even if it is just an overnight stay in a fabulous city resort.

Many dream of a beautiful vacation home, but it is a dream that requires determination and the desire to see the big picture. And what exactly is that big picture? That a vacation home can be an exciting expression of innate creativity, that it can forge stronger family ties and deeper friendships by taking us away from our mundane tasks, and letting our truer selves emerge.

In this issue, we have taken on the challenge of bridging the reality and the fantasy. We want to inspire you, our dearest readers, with beautiful vacation homes and destinations, and we also present ways and means to give your home a transporative feeling. Maybe the reality is that we may not be able to take all the vacations we want. But we can take a mental break, and the right environment can make us slow down and revel in all the little moments that renew our tired spirits.



Raph Kiefer

Raph is a model, writer and entrepreneur with an advocacy for local culture. His most recent venture includes setting up and supporting livelihood programs in textile-producing communities in the Philippines to preserve and trade heritage looms. During summer, he co-produces a peace festival in Mindanao, the place he still calls home, to support his other advocacy: promoting permaculture. This issue, Raph got to chat with Alessandro Calligaris, the current chairman and the grandson of the founder of the company, about the essence of their brand ("Philosophy of Design, p. 15).

Patricia Tumang

Since being awarded an Arts Writers Grant from the Creative Capital | Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers in 2012, Patricia has been traveling across the Philippines to conduct research and write about Philippine contemporary art. Before moving to Manila in 2009, she resided in Oakland,

California, where she earned an MFA in English and Creative Writing from Mills College in 2006. For this issue, she writes about the new photography book of Jake Verzosa ("The Tattooed Women of Kalinga," p. 32).

Kurt Alvarez

Kurt is a second generation commercial lifestyle photographer who practices Kendo. He likes runny peanut butter and travels when he can. In this issue, he shot a colorful home designed by Heima's Rosy Yabut-Rojales ("Home of Eternal Summers," p. 90).

Pat Mateo

This photographer has shot almost anything and everything under the sun for both editorial and commercial clients. But shooting portraits, products and food remain closest to his heart. For this issue, he shot Filipino-themed hand-printed fabrics from Hocus Manila ("Homegrown Abstractions," p. 16) and the newest furniture lines of E. Murio ("Local Revamp," p. 13).

Easy-Does-It Country Interiors

A LAIDBACK APPROACH
TO FIXING UP YOUR HOME

BY BARBIE PARDO-TIANGCO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



RELAXED AND CHARACTER-LADEN interiors are not going away this 2015. It's an obvious revolution against the ultra matched, totally calculated, one style only and over decorated aesthetic of the past.

Today's home is filled with items of different styles and eras, often nonsensically arranged. It's about curating your space only with items you love. The same goes especially for our country vacation homes. Priceless antiques sit prominently with kitschy market finds, lovingly handcrafted items lean against mass produced pieces, and bright colored accessories try to hide amidst beautifully muted tones. Yet, somehow, it works.

Break all the stiff interior design rules and go with your instincts. What feels right to you will turn your vacation house into a vacation home. *Shot on location at Craftsmith Living*

FROM LEFT: Yardstick wall hanger, P1,800. Yardstick metal and wood crate, P2,500. Gift wrapper, P80. Chalkboard sheets, P150 each, All from Craftsmith living. Fox stole, P24,000, ac+632. Dried cotton flower, P750 per branch, Craftsmith living. Deer head, P6,900, Sifra. Binocular bag, price available upon request Prizmic and Brill. Boar babu bookend, P2,650, Fellix. Hand carved wooden frame, P2,500. Metal alphabet, P2,500, both from Craftsmith living.

ABOVE: Dreamcatcher, starts at P1,500, Craftsmith living. **ON THE CHAIR:** Mink stole, P19,800, ac+632. Fisherman's market hand printed pillow on cotton canvas, P1,200, Craftsmith living. Safari chair-beige canvas, price available upon request, Prizmic and Brill. **AT THE BACK (FROM LEFT):** Lamp shade with stand, P5,495, Sifra. Stainless globe, P4,800, Sifra. Harvested color, P190, All in the bag. Oval soup tureen with handle, P63,800, ac+632. Boat, P3,895, Sifra. Metal alphabet (small), P1,500. Metal alphabet (large), P2,500, both from Craftsmith living. **ABOVE:** Fox head on wood, P24,000, ac+632. Vintage clock stand, P3,495, Sifra. **UNDER THE TABLE:** Kubu baskets, P450 each. Indian cotton dhurrie, starts at P15,000. White metal square stool, P5,800, all from Craftsmith living. **ON THE FLOOR:** Anatolia basket, P1,500. Craftsmith living.



CLOCKWISE: Vintage red car, P4,480. Alligator bottle opener, P1,480. Oval tray with flower medallion, P3,680, All from ac+632. Hour glass, P3,895, Sifra. Yorkshire with silver lid, P190, All in the bag. Dog with long stand, P3495, Sifra. Porcelain "Judge Dog" pedestal, P3,980, ac+632. Zuny giant hippo, P34,700, Feliix.



New and Exciting

NEW ITEMS, NEW COLLABORATIONS



A NEW SENSUALITY IN THE BATHROOM

Lulu by Sieger Design is a trend that goes far beyond the bathroom. Its sensual shapes represent enjoyment of life. It is ultra soft and ultra linear, ultra slender and ultra alert. It is part of the Dornbracht product line, the most luxurious brand of designer fittings and accessories for the bathroom and the kitchen. The name Lulu pays homage to Loulou de la Falaise, a style icon and former muse of fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent. *Dornbracht is exclusively distributed by Focus Palantir Inc., a subsidiary of Focus Global, Inc. For more information, call 634-8587, loc 411 or visit www.dornbracht.com*

WINE STORAGE AND SERVICE

Cellar Solutions, the authority on wine preservation, opened its first showroom in the Philippines. Its anchor brand is the Vintec wine cabinet, which addresses proper storage and service of wine. Vintec has various features, bottle capacities, and shelving designs to meet various requirements. Owners of Vintec wine cellars also automatically become members of The Vintec Club. Exclusive benefits include special industry updates, wine reviews, special offers and private invitations to wine events and gatherings. Product-viewing at the Cellar Solutions showroom at the Ground Floor, L&H Building, Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City. *For more information, visit www.cellarsolutions.com.ph or the Instagram account @VintecPH*



RECOGNIZING THE BEST IN REAL ESTATE

Now on its third year, the Philippines Property Awards (PPA) is one of the regional awards show of the Asia Property Awards, which showcases outstanding developers, projects and services in the real estate industry. PPA selects works of art that highlight the beauty and originality of the Asian real estate industry, including construction, architecture and interior design.

Ensign Media is the official organizer of the PPA and publisher of the *Property Report* magazine. It has partnered with ABS-CBN Publishing, Inc. to boost awareness about the world-class projects and innovations of the

property industry in the Philippines.

On July 9, an esteemed panel of judges will give out 26 awards to those who have produced high quality work over a star gala dinner at The Raffles and Fairmont Makati.

The awards are categorized into four: Developer Awards, Development Awards, Design Awards and Best of the Best. The winners of this year's PPA will also compete in the South East Asia Property Awards in Singapore on October 15. In photo (from left) are Salvador López Oliva, Terry Blackburn, Cyndy Jarabata, Grace Ofamen and Mark Yambot. *Photograph by Allan Sancon*



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Meet Stella

ELBA INTRODUCES A NEW SERIES OF RANGE HOOD, WHICH IS DECORATIVE AND HIGHLY EFFICIENT

STAYING FAITHFUL to the true Italian style in culinary experience, ELBA applies the same simplicity and passion in crafting their range of cooking appliances. The brand's products mirror the Italian heritage, which prioritizes quality and ensures that every feature and detail are well thought out.

ELBA's aim is "to offer products that enhance the beauty of homes and lives, because your kitchen is a unique space and deserves the excellence of real benefits." This is why the brand is always on the lookout for new technologies and new designs

to meet the consumers' preferences and lifestyle.

Among ELBA's new and exciting products is the Stella Decorative Range Hood. The stark contrast between the black glass accents and stainless steel body highlights the unit's dynamic and sophisticated character. It features a curved glass design with smoked glass on top and a black glass facia with digital touch screen controls encased in a stainless steel frame. This sleek style and elegant finish make Stella a great accent in your kitchen.

It has stylish and efficient ambient LED lighting and easy-to-clean aluminium cassette filters. Clearly a definite winner in the style department, the Stella Decorative Range Hood also packs a lot of impressive technical features, such as suction power of 1,000 m3h (cubic meters per hour) to eliminate smoke and odors from your kitchen environment.

The Stella Range Hood is available in both 60cm and 90cm widths and is a perfect complement to ELBA's wide assortment of freestanding ranges and built-in appliances. ■

Make an elegant statement in your kitchen with the new Stella Decorative Range Hood by ELBA.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ELBA

Local Revamp

E. MURIO'S NEWEST FURNITURE LINES ARE POISED AS MODERN CLASSICS

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAT MATEO



ABOVE: The *Miqueta* collection by E. Murio takes pride in the company's tradition of using bamboo and rattan as materials, but are scaled down to fit current condo size trends. BELOW: E. Murio's handcrafted tradition persists through their modern renaissance.



THE NEW E. MURIO collections launched by creative director Tisha de Borja are not the kind of heavy wooden furniture that we grew up with in *Lola's* home. While the materials are basically the same—*Miqueta* pieces made of rattan and bamboo, and *Isola* items made of bulkier hardwood such as *kamagong*—they are given a more modern treatment to suit today's urban abode.

Tisha, who is an architect and interior designer, explains the concepts behind their new

home pieces. “*Miqueta* is all bamboo and rattan. The lines are simpler and scaled down for apartment living, as we try to simplify everything in order to appeal to a broader range. *Isola* focuses on traditional methods of woodworking. It is very luxurious and each piece is very hard to prototype.”

She adds that of the two, *Miqueta* looks younger, a deviation from the pieces that E. Murio is known for. “Our classic line has a very focused aesthetic, it

The *Isola* collection is crafted with secondhand lumber. This line has aspects of classic furniture design in its use of hardwood detail. **BELOW LEFT:** A glimpse into E. Murio's factory and the jigs used for furniture making. They function not unlike patterns for sewing.



is more traditional. With *Isola*, the design may be a bit more classic, for people who appreciate the qualities of wood and our kind of craftsmanship. With both lines, our finishing makes a big difference." One of the things that E. Murio introduced in the two new collections is the Patina finish, which is basically a layer of different colors that are rubbed out to achieve a warmer, weathered look.

That size matters is something that *Miqueta* addresses. "There are so many condominiums coming up, and the spaces tend to be small. With the new collection, not only are things scaled down, they look light and are actually lightweight. These furniture and furniture accessories serve many purposes and can easily fit from room to room." This doesn't mean that your house gets a *bahay-kubo* look, as Tisha brings these traditional materials into the modern times. "You can see right away that the aesthetic is not traditional. Bamboo and rattan are very versatile materials to work

with. The finishes give them a different look immediately. More than the traditional grass binding, we use rope and leather, and this changes everything."

Speaking of look, she gives this tip on how to incorporate their wooden pieces into an eclectic home. "You don't have to go Filipino all the way, just look for pieces that can break the monotony," she advises. "When you want to achieve something eclectic rather than thematic, not everything needs to have a consistent look. You just need to inject your own character in the space—maybe a pop of color, a different material, or a play on scale."

Wooden furniture, especially those that use local materials, has an environment-friendly aspect. "The fact that we do use bamboo and rattan is a factor. We also like to use secondhand lumber for our solid-wood pieces. Since it is wood, it lasts a really long time. We have clients who bought pieces from us 20 years ago, and they say these are still in good condition. Another thing with the materials that we use is that they actually look better as they age." ■

Philosophy of Design

SMART AND FUNCTIONAL IS THE ESSENCE OF ITALIAN BRAND CALLIGARIS

BY RAPH KIEFER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEROME APOSTOL



ABOVE: The new Calligaris showroom in The Clipp Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. BELOW: Florence Ko, Calligaris Managing Director, with Mr. Alessandro Calligaris, Chairman of Calligaris and grandson of the founder.



ONE ICONIC BRAND that is responsible for spreading Italian smart design across the world is Calligaris, which has been family-owned for three generations since its inception in 1923.

"Italy has a deep history of style which began in the Renaissance period," the current chairman of the company Alessandro Calligaris and grandson of the founder of the company tells **Metro Home**. "We share the Italian aesthetic in over 90 countries with our wide range of products." Calligaris has over 7,000 products for kitchens and dining rooms to living rooms, home offices and bedrooms.

A company with a 90-year history must adapt to stay relevant, a trait that Calligaris is familiar with. The company introduced "functional" design 20 years ago, and this versatility has become the norm today. Alessandro explains, "People

are moving to smaller spaces, so we created smart designs like the tables that an individual can make bigger or smaller with ease. We have also recently introduced technology such as the "totem," a software which allows you to project your area as you want. This way, you become your own architect. And the interesting thing is that taste in design in the world is almost the same. We're evolving with the world!" The totem is an App that is available for everyone at any Calligaris showroom. It allows the user to virtually mix and match furniture from their line. These innovations are a great indicator that the company is staying current.

The one thing that has not changed over the decades is the passion for Italian design. Something that Alessandro explains is the very philosophy of the corporate structure. "We

have the opportunity to put our mentality and philosophy into people's homes. A house needs emotion and that's what we bring in...so that lives will be better."

In the Philippines, Calligaris is distributed by GruppoMobili Philippines, who has given the brand a new home. At the launch, managing director Florence Ko shares, "We're very excited with the launch of Calligaris' new home and showroom at BGC. Calligaris is perfect for young, upwardly mobile professionals looking to furnish their condos or houses with designer furniture at reasonable prices." ■

Visit Calligaris at their showroom at the mezzanine floor, Clipp Center, 11th Ave. cor. 39th Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. For inquiries, call 869-1059 to 61 or email info.calligaris@furnitalia.com.ph



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF CALLIGARIS

Homegrown Abstractions

FILIPINO-THEMED
HANDPRINTED FABRICS

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAT MATEO



Kalachuchi (LEFT) and *Okir* fabrics by Hocus Manila. BELOW: Hocus Manila's rendition of the *Toile de Jouy* using Filipino motifs.

FILIPINO ENTREPRENEURS

Shaena Tobias and Andrei Salud of Hocus Manila now have their own version of the French-designed *toile* using linen fabric prints with imagery found in our local shores.

Shaena explains that *toile* actually started out with chinoiserie designs on silk, and then adapted on harder cloth depicting French pastoral scenes. "We just gave the *Toile de Jouy* a Filipino spin," she says.

Their version is imprinted with the iconic *bahay kubo* on a beach along with seascapes of fishermen on a *banca* and corals. And then there is the *okir*, which references the mother-of-pearl inlay pattern commonly found in the *baul*.

Something that is truly organic and endemic in the Philippines is their print of the *kalachuchi* leaf. "We were thinking of popular landscaping plants, and we thought of the *kalachuchi*, which for some reason was very popular in the

'70s." Andrei interpreted the image of the large leaf, down to the midrib and the veins. Their plant-based designs include the large *antipolo* or *rimas* leaves and the *makahiya*, where they focused on the puff-like flower.

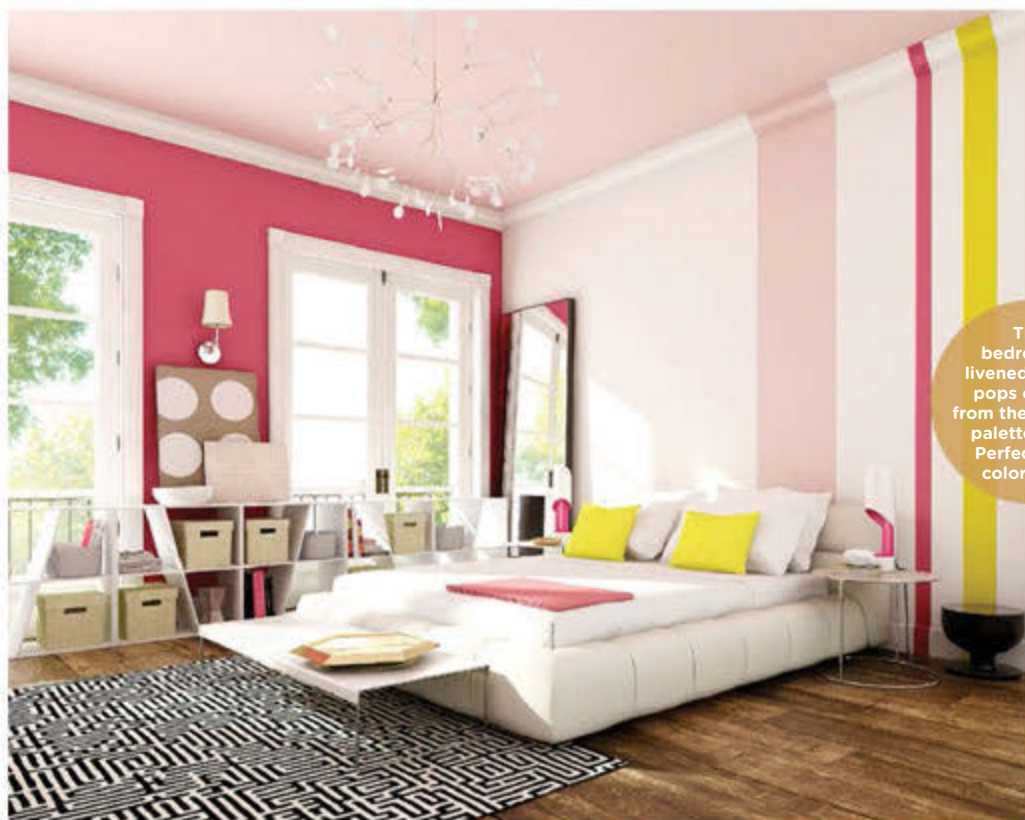
Aside from their Filipino designs, Hocus Manila takes their advocacy further by sourcing their materials from Anthill Fabric Gallery in Cebu, a social and cultural enterprise that showcases local hand-loomed fabrics and their contemporary application to modern designs. Hocus Manila designs are printed using textile paint in 5-yard batches of 30-inch widths on *katsa* or muslin and Filipino fabrics *kantarines*, *abaca*, and *kulambo*. Clients have ordered fabrics for lampshades, curtains, table napkins, place mats, and throw pillow covers. Hocus Manila also conducts pop-ups and printing workshops. ■

Hocus Manila is headquartered at Craft MNL, at the Pamana Building, Makati City. Visit www.hocusmanila.com.



Color Personalities

EXPLORE, EXPERIMENT
AND EXPRESS YOURSELF
WITH THE BOYSEN
COLOR TREND 2015



This bedroom is livened up with pops of color from the subdued palette of the Perfectionist color story.



I Love Hue

CREATE A PERENNIAL SUMMER IN YOUR HOME USING COLORS FROM THE FOLLOWING COLLECTIONS

NATURIST. Deep, dewy, earthy, this hue brings in the lush greens, warm wood tones, and vibrant reds into your living space, and creates a sunny and uplifting home that is harmonious with the world outside.

KINETIC. This palette is for those living in the fast lane, where things vibrate at a higher pitch. The intensity of tangerine is balanced by cool grays and sophisticated blues.

AVANT-GARDE. Bold, edgy, unconventional—reds, blues, yellows, greens—all a little bit off the beaten track. Combinations are bound only by imagination.

PERFECTIONIST. This palette is for those who prefer the subtlety of classic colors. The tones are simple, subdued and sophisticated, perfect for those who like calming their senses at home.

COLORS HAVE THEIR OWN personalities. They are the magic ingredients that bring rooms to life and create the charisma and character that you want your spaces to exude. For 2015, Boysen forecasted four color themes: Naturist, Kinetic, Avant-Garde and Perfectionist. These color themes, which were introduced during the Color Trend 2015 Event early this year, were based on the results of an extensive research project with international partners. They are inspired by social influences on our current lifestyle.

"Filipinos have always been known to be creative with expressing themselves through color, whether through the clothes they wear or the things they carry," said Johnson Ongking, Vice President of Pacific

Paint (Boysen) Philippines, Inc. "We compared notes with color experts around the world so we could understand global lifestyle trends that were influencing color choices. These four palettes contain elements of what we're seeing in the Philippines combined with what other color professionals are seeing in other parts of the world."

Boysen is part of the Nova Paint Club, an international organization of leading paint companies from Europe, Asia, North America and South America. Color Trend 2015 is the result of a collaboration of Boysen with its partners in Nova and a global color research company, which has extensive experience in forecasting color trends in the global fashion, publishing, automotive, and

telecommunications industries.

Ongking adds, "People react to what's happening to society today in different ways. Some people enjoy the fast paced lifestyle; others feel a need to be in closer touch with nature. Some crave for more stimulation and want to push the boundaries further; others prefer a retreat to the calming classics. We're hoping that however people see themselves and the world around them, these palettes can help them find the right colors to make their living spaces look good and make themselves feel good." ■

The four color personalities are now available in more than 400 Mix and Match stations throughout the country. For more information, visit www.boysencolortrends.com.

A Touch of Summer

NAUTICAL, TROPICAL AND COZY CABIN-STYLE ITEMS TO GIVE YOUR HOME A VACATION FEEL

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO



The Next Nautical

Forget tradition! Set your sights on a cleaner, leaner, sleeker nautical expression



CLOCKWISE: Deacon drum in red, P9,500, Pottery Barn. Large pearlescent nautilus shell with coral stand, P11,500. Silver plated coral napkin ring, P1,900, both from Arden. Oyster 54 boat, P20,000, Hive. Mother of pearl shell with silver plated coral ring holder, P6,950, Arden. Double sided picture frame, P3,480, Firma.





Island High

The easy breezy feeling of a tropical holiday infuses your home with freshness and fun.





CLOCKWISE: Andres chair, P16,700, Hive. Apple tree candle holder, P21,800, Firma. Large rope encased buoy, P1,950, Pottery Barn. Wooden candlestick, P265, H&M home. Julia outdoor side table, P24,500, Kish. Jameson hurricanes, P4,450. Hyannis glass lantern, P2,950, both from Pottery Barn. Cushion cover, 799, H&M home.



Cabin Fever

Channel the romantic warmth of a homey log cabin, but in a style that has been streamlined and reinterpreted for a more urbane setting



Top Tanks

AN AQUARIUM FOR EVERY SPECIFICATION

BY GABY ALEGRE



LEFT: Dr. Glenn Angeles, ophthalmologist and part owner of The Big Fish Place, an aquarium purveyor

THE SOOTHING SOUND of water and bubbles, combined with the sight of multi-colored fish darting back and forth is a fool-proof (and scientifically proven) way to bring nature into a home. For Dr. Glenn Angeles, a full time ophthalmologist and part time owner of The Big Fish Place, having an aquarium in your home promotes relaxation and is an instant stress reliever.

What started out as a hobby for collecting exotic fish turned into a full-fledged business for Glenn Angeles: "I started importing fish from Africa, Peru and Colombia in 2002." Angeles specializes in freshwater fish—arowanas, goldfish, and numerous monsterfishes—those that grow large like peacock basses and catfish—and sting rays.

Relaxation, however, is not the only thing aquariums bring into a home. Arowanas, which are known as auspicious fish, are often recommended by feng shui masters to bring luck into

a home, and are one of Angeles' fascinations.

What are the most requested fish choices for aquariums?

Arowanas are one of the most popular and prestigious aquarium fishes—and have even become status symbols for some. Prices for one arowana range from 6,000 to a million pesos each. Koi are best appreciated from the top view, in ponds, while arowanas, with their shimmering scales, are best viewed in aquariums. Red arowanas are said to bring in luck, while gold arowanas are auspicious for business. They are also believed

to save lives—when one of them dies, it is believed to have taken bad luck along with it.

What challenges do you encounter?

It's a bit more difficult when the owners are not as invested in the fish—but it's great that there is a community of fish enthusiasts, and stores such as ours that can answer clients' questions on fish care.

What was your most interesting project?

We had an 8-foot tank housing arowanas, and I really enjoy arowana projects. Arowanas grow more colorful as they grow bigger. ■

Design Smarts

1 Consider your space. Aquariums are part of a space's interiors. You may opt for stands that can be custom designed and tailored for very specific spaces.

2 Choose your aquarium type, and fish, wisely. Freshwater aquariums cost less, and require less maintenance than saltwater fish, making them a recommended choice for beginners. Source your fish from quality suppliers, and ask for recommendations. (Fun fact: All arowanas from the Big Fish Place have microchips inside, for tracking purposes, and all come with certificates)

3 Light it up! Dimness and brightness will depend on the type of fish that live in your aquarium.

4 Do your research Read up before anything else! Get to know the fish you will be caring for. Compatibility is key—the variety of fish in your aquarium will depend on which fish can cohabit in one space. There are loads of online resources, and you can always go back to your supplier for tips for caring for your fish

5 Care for your fish. Invest in a good filtration system. Follow your fish's feeding needs strictly. Twenty percent of the water needs to be replaced every week, and the filtration system needs to be cleaned every month.

The Big Fish Place, 2/F Madison Square Ortigas Ave. cor. Madison St., San Juan. Tel. 791-7200. Email: thebigfishplace@gmail.com

Making a Splash

WHEN BUILDING A POOL, FIRST THINGS FIRST—CONSIDER YOUR NEEDS AND LIFESTYLE

BY GABY ALEGRE



LEFT: Pool builders Veronica and Bobby Celestino of Pool Tech Jaya Group Co. RIGHT: The tension edge or infinity pool is currently the most requested by clients for pool copings.



FOR POOL BUILDERS

Veronica “Tweetie” Mesina-Celestino and husband Bobby, good design makes all the difference. “When we do projects with skilled and prominent architects, that’s one of the highlights,” says Bobby.

Before marrying Bobby and putting up their own company, Tweetie worked in her family’s pool construction business. Today, the couple’s Pool Tech Jaya Group Co., constructs water features, and koi ponds for both residential and resort projects.

What are the new trends for pools?

Bobby: Nowadays, people want to be physically fit! Most clients ask for lap pools for exer-

cise, doing away with deep pools. Most pools now are uni-level, and only 4.5 to 5 feet deep.

Tweetie: For the coping—the perimeter of the pool—what’s most popular is tension edge, more commonly known as overflow-type or infinity pools.

Bobby: Another earth-friendly innovation we’re pursuing is chlorine-free or salt pools. There is a machine that turns salt into a chlorine alternative. These are quite an investment—there is an attachment—but you recover your initial investment after three years. A pool shouldn’t be just for recreation, it should also be a healthy pool. With chlorine-

free pools, you do away with the harshness of chlorine, its smell and negative effects on skin.

What challenges do you encounter when building pools?

Bobby: Residential pools usually take 68 working days to build, but this depends on the size. The Beacon Academy pool took ten months!

Tweetie: Building pools is tiring and demanding, but at the end of the day, seeing the client happy is most rewarding.

What was your favorite project?

Bobby: My personal favorite is the Olympic-sized Beacon Academy pool in Laguna, which is around six-and-a-half feet

deep. We custom-designed it so that a part of the pool can be used for underwater hockey.

Tweetie: My favorite is a Balinese-inspired pool we made together with landscape architect Paulo Alcazaren for a client who needed to use her pool for therapy. We installed grab rails and hydro jets for massage purposes. We decorated the pool with Balinese-inspired tiles and accessories from Indonesia, where we often source our materials. Another favorite is a cantilevered pool we did for another client. ■

For more information, you may reach Pool Tech Jaya Group Co. at pooltechjaya@yahoo.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MONICA CELESTINO
PHOTOGRAPH (PORTRAIT) BY JOVEL LORENZO



The Celestinos have built various pools for many uses. Nowadays, clients opt for a lap pool (BELOW) for fitness.



Design Smarts

1 Know what you want. First things first. Consider your needs and lifestyle. Determine what the pool will be used for—fitness, therapy, or leisure. When that is set, the pool size, depth and finishing—tiles, lights, and other features such as water jets—will follow.

2 Keep it clean and well maintained. A pool maintenance program is key. Be sure to stick to the program. The moment you fail to maintain your pool, it'll be more costly to recover," cautions Bobby.

3 Better safe than sorry. Safety is paramount.

Ensure that those who use your pool know how to swim. Safety is a top priority!

4 Size matters. Consider the plan and layout of your home. The pool is only a part of your house—bigger is not always better. Oversized pools are difficult to maintain.

5 Consult a professional. Always consult an architect or landscape architect for your space planning needs. When building a pool, keep in mind not just the size and depth of your pool, but what the space around it will be used for.

The Million Dollar Decorators

MARY MCDONALD AND NATHAN TURNER ADD BRILLIANT EXCITEMENT AND AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO THE PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE SHOW

BY LEAH PUYAT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAR CONCENGCO AND JOVEL LORENZO



Stars of the Bravo design show, *Million Dollar Decorators*, Nathan Turner and Mary McDonald, were in the country for the Philippine International Furniture Show held in the SMX Convention Center last March 13-16.

THE FRIENDSHIP is easily evident, and the amusing banter is endlessly entertaining. As professional decorators and reality show stars, the chic and glamorous Mary McDonald and the fun and ever youthful, quintessentially West Coast preppy Nathan Turner recalled their tour of Intramuros, and their upcoming itinerary that included Boracay, Cebu and Siargao, a thought bubble popped into my head: we didn't even have to ask any questions. The Mary and Nathan show would have just gone on, and we could have just enjoyed it.

Nathan enthused over the *Bahay na Bato*, and declares, "I want to bring one to Malibu right now! That's how much I loved it!" Mary fell in love with the *vakuls*, rain hats used by the Ivatans of Batanes, and quips, "I just may base an entire line of fabrics on it!" They were gracious and generous in their answers, and just as giving when it came time to pose for their formal portraits and the requisite selfies and groupies when the formal interviews and shoot were over.

The two stars of *Million Dollar Decorators* were in Manila to do more than just sight seeing. They were invited by the Creative Director of PIFS 2015, architect and interior designer J. Anton Gonzalez Mendoza, to not only be guests of the furniture show, but to give an informal design talk that was the runaway blockbuster hit of the show. Mary and Nathan also had a preview of the exhibits, and tagged certain products that stood out for them with the label that looked like giant red ribbons



Nathan Turner and Mary McDonald previewed the design fair, and gave their nod of approval to select pieces, such as these from Vito Selma, JB Wood Crafts and Hacienda Crafts.



ABOVE: The decorators enjoyed the local color in Boracay and Siargao's Dedon Island. Photographs from @erichughesdesign and @nturnerdesign.

proclaiming: Handpicked by Nathan or Mary.

United Layers of Patina

They do have different styles. Mary originally went to Parsons School of Design in New York to study fashion, and though she was still a student, she did up her studio apartment with so much polish and panache that her fellow students asked her for help in decorating their own flats. Her original passion for style and fashion is still reflected in the spaces she orchestrates.

She admits, "I do have a fun way with glamour, although that word has become overused and meaningless now. There are only a handful of us who can do this look. I still love fashion, and sometimes do think of doing a jewelry line."

Nathan majored in business but in setting up an antique shop somehow also became a decora-

tor. He openly admits, "When I first came to L.A., Mary took me under her wing, introduced me to her suppliers and showed me how the business works. I grew up in the Bay Area, mostly on the family ranch, and I guess I have come to be known for a style that is generally characterized as all-American."

They are passionate about the layered and curated look. "There are people who do like everything in their homes to be completely new, and those people don't go to me," quips Nathan.

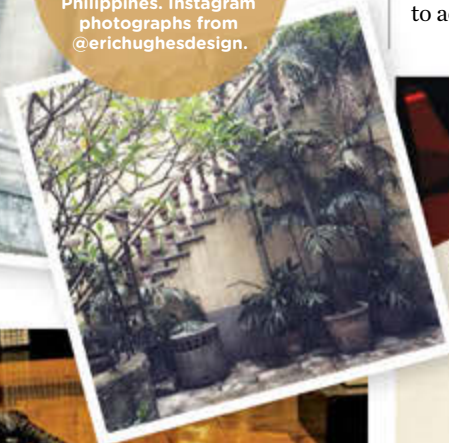
In one episode of *Million Dollar Decorators*, Mary admits, "I've been told that I like to layer to within an inch of my life. I don't know if that's true. But I do know what I like and usually, I give the clients what I know they will like rather than what they think they like. And everybody is happy in the end."

A quick look at the pieces handpicked by the





The decorators' first full day in Manila was spent touring Intramuros, where they got a glimpse of Colonial Philippines. Instagram photographs from @erichughesdesign.



two decorators reveals a few commonalities. They are both obsessed with texture, and so the pieces are usually finished with gradations of color and techniques. They do not go for pieces that belong to any one look, but they chose objects that had a fresh, vibe of the now, without being overly trendy or complicated.

Both of them did not have set scripts for their talk on the second day of PIFS 2015. Mary got the show started with a slide show of a shop she did in New York. "I imagined the shop floor to be like a living room rather than just a traditional shop, so that made it different." She also noted that she liked to use pastels such as lavender as a neutral to add life to her rooms.

Nathan then showed a

beach house that he had done. His tip: "When my client has all these small pictures or things I don't know what to do with, I create a gallery wall to personalize the space."

L.A. Faux-Hemian

Mary then revealed, "At their beach house, they always put up photos of everyone who goes there, and it's fun to see the not-so-nice ones!" For the Luxe Bohemian segment of her talk, Mary joked, "In L.A., we like to call that Faux-hemian. I liked the look of old croquet mallets, so my assistants were on e-Bay forever, buying up all the old mallets they could!"

A very practical gesture was that both decorators would point to various objects in the installations around them and



LEFT: A Joseph Rastrullo chair gets a tag of approval from Mary McDonald. RIGHT: Nathan Turner is taken by these burlwood boxes (right) and nesting tables by Cymbu Fine Furniture (above).





Philippine-made products of various materials, shapes and uses received the decorators' tags in a proud Philippine International Furniture Show exhibit.



LEFT AND BELOW: Mary and Nathan explore the local scene in Boracay (photo from @erichughesdesign). BOTTOM: Arriving at Dedon Island, Nathan says, "We're here! Checking out our digs for the week." (Photo from @nturnerdesign).



say, "Some of those pieces would also go well with this interior." These little directional comments helped to "humanize" their creative process, and showed how dynamic and spontaneous decorating can be, and that an open attitude and a dis-

cerning eye are more important than a million dollar budget.

Anyone who watches their show knows that they love to travel and are intrepid shoppers. Mary felt that meeting the manufacturers might lead to important business collaborations and relationships, while Nathan said that he and his buyers certainly were working overtime in finding merchandise for his shop. In Cebu, Nathan fell in love with the work of Vito Selma.

Mary and Nathan both loved the intense riot of color in the provincial markets, capturing a tricycle overflowing with pineapples. But they seemed to have truly fallen for Dedon Island, in Siargao. Nathan snapped away at the lighting fixtures and Mary wanted to take home her carved headboard, with figures of the ocean and marine life.

On their Instagram accounts, they both hashtagged that they would be back. And we will be happy to watch more of their Philippine design adventures. ■

Tropical Bravura

CELEBRATE SUMMER in your get-togethers with friends and family. Simply combine creativity and fun via a DIY activity by creating an inexpensive yet beautiful tropical centerpiece. It looks like a palm tree but is innovatively made from affordable and fresh pineapples and palmera leaves.

The materials are easy to find, and you can make this centerpiece at home. It will surely capture the attention of your guests. Here are the simple steps to follow:

1. Gather the following materials, conveniently available at the grocery store:


- 4 large fresh pineapples
- Palmera leaves - pick them from the garden or buy from a flower shop
- Pole made of iron or steel
- Plastic bags to cover the pole

- Transparent tape
- Knife
- Scissors
- Floral foam

2. Use the transparent tape to wind the plastic bag around the pole to cover it. The pole will be the core that will support your pineapple "palm tree."

3. Core the pineapples from the bottom with a sharp kitchen knife. Then slide the pineapples one by one onto the pole to create a sturdy looking tree trunk.

4. Cut the floral foam and insert it on top of the pole. The foam will hold all the palmera leaves on top of the trunk.

5. Prepare the palmera leaves by trimming some of the leaves, and cutting some in half. Insert the leaves into the floral foam in varying heights in order to create a realistic looking palm tree. 



A PINEAPPLE 'PALM TREE' CENTERPIECE FOR A LOVELY SUMMER VIBE

BY TESS RAYMUNDO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN LLESSES



Tips on Uses:

Use a tropical centerpiece to add a cool summer vibe to your home or get-together. Here's how you can use and display your DIY Pineapple Palm Tree:

1 As a centerpiece for a tropical-themed brunch, lunch or dinner. Put the pineapple palm tree in the middle of your dining table. Add more color by placing other elements such as festive tableware, fresh fruits, refreshing juices and colorful cocktail drinks.

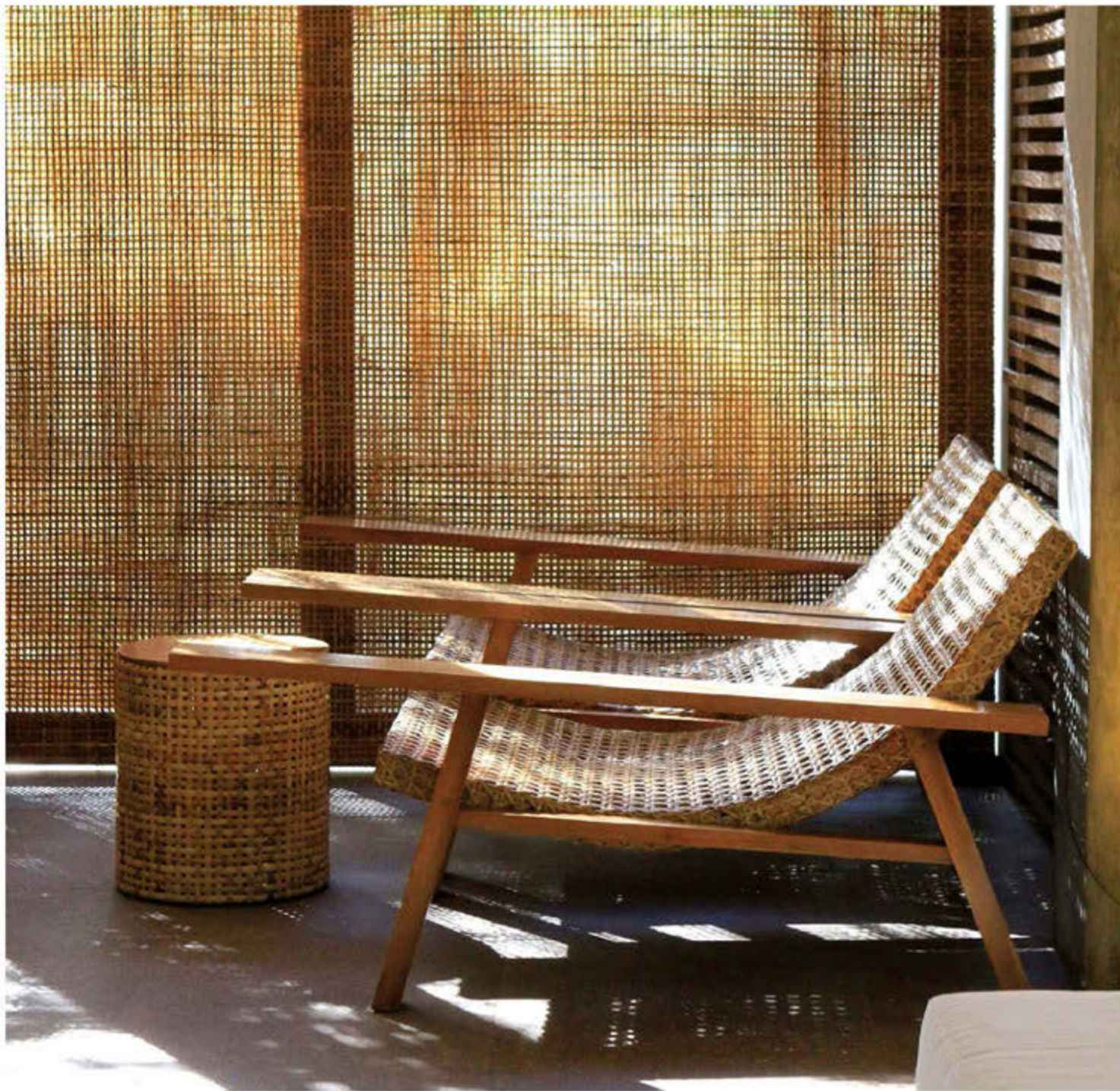
2 Spruce up a buffet table for a Hawaiian-themed party. Surround the pineapple palm trees with colorful fresh fruits and desserts in the buffet table.

3 Upgrade your garden brunch setup. Boost the overall look and feel of the summer-themed brunch in your garden or the poolside area of your home.

folio

ART / DESIGN / PLACES / INSPIRATION

Designer Hospitality, p. 36



Flesh Delirium

THE SPIRIT OF THE ART INSTALLATION 'OPERA' COULD HAVE BEEN DRAWN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SURGEON WHO SEES LIFE AND DEATH FROM DAY TO DAY

BY BARRY VILORIA

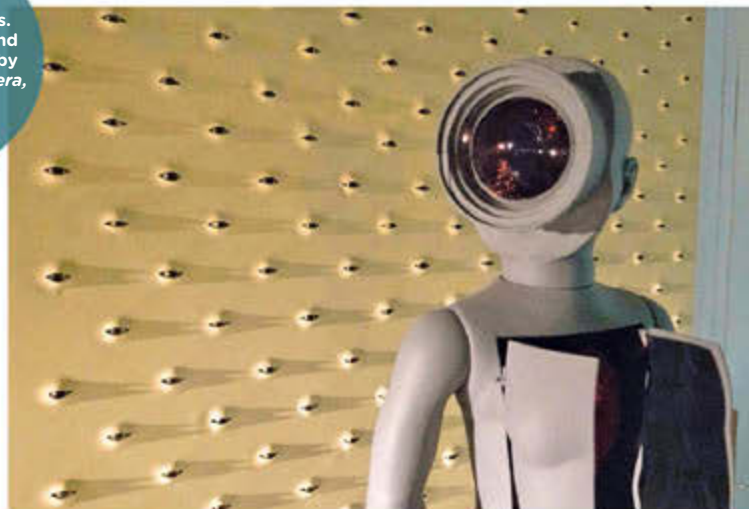


IN *OPERA*, GABBY Barredo illustrates two of humanity's most complex mysteries—life and death. While the elements of his art remain basic—household items (wood, steel, chairs, bones, stockings, figurines, etc.) and some multimedia elements put together by Erwin Romulo, Malek Lopez and Jason Tam—*Opera* shocks with the artist's detailed and compound creations.

An award-winning “kinetic artist” who studied sculpture at the University of Santo Tomas, Barredo has carved his niche in the art of sculpture and mixed media installations way before *Opera*. His recent show sees no downplay of his signature grandiose style and is hoisted up with more vividness, hence, more shock factor.

Barredo interprets death in one room,

ABOVE: Stadium figure on the seats.
RIGHT: Lens wall and wall of eyes. Both by Gabby Barredo. *Opera*, 2015. Silverlens Gallery.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF SILVERLENS GALLERY

capturing it with clear elements of gore: bleeding, beaten skulls, rotten flesh. Blood and vomit, two symptoms of any serious disease or expiry, seem splattered on the floor; aborted fetuses are suspended in the air while wrapped in overstretched wombs and soaked in blood; the room is engulfed in bristling sound effects. One of the highlights is a deathbed with the soul seemingly departing the body. The bed glows in full glory, the body rests in lifelessness, the soul elevates and stays afloat—you suddenly feel the sad spectacle that is demise.

Positioned in other corners are images of flesh falling off the body: a carcass seemingly mutilated; a lonesome child skinned to death; and a silhouette of a man's face scraped to reveal the brain, muscles, tissues, and all. Here is where you see and feel pain, torture, vulnerability, which are all part of existence.

Barredo's interpretation of life in the other gallery fairly elicits lesser shudder, capturing the story of rebirth and growth only with elements of rawness and youth: infantile body parts, fresh body fluids, light coming to vision for a child's first time. The space is bereft of carnage and, instead,

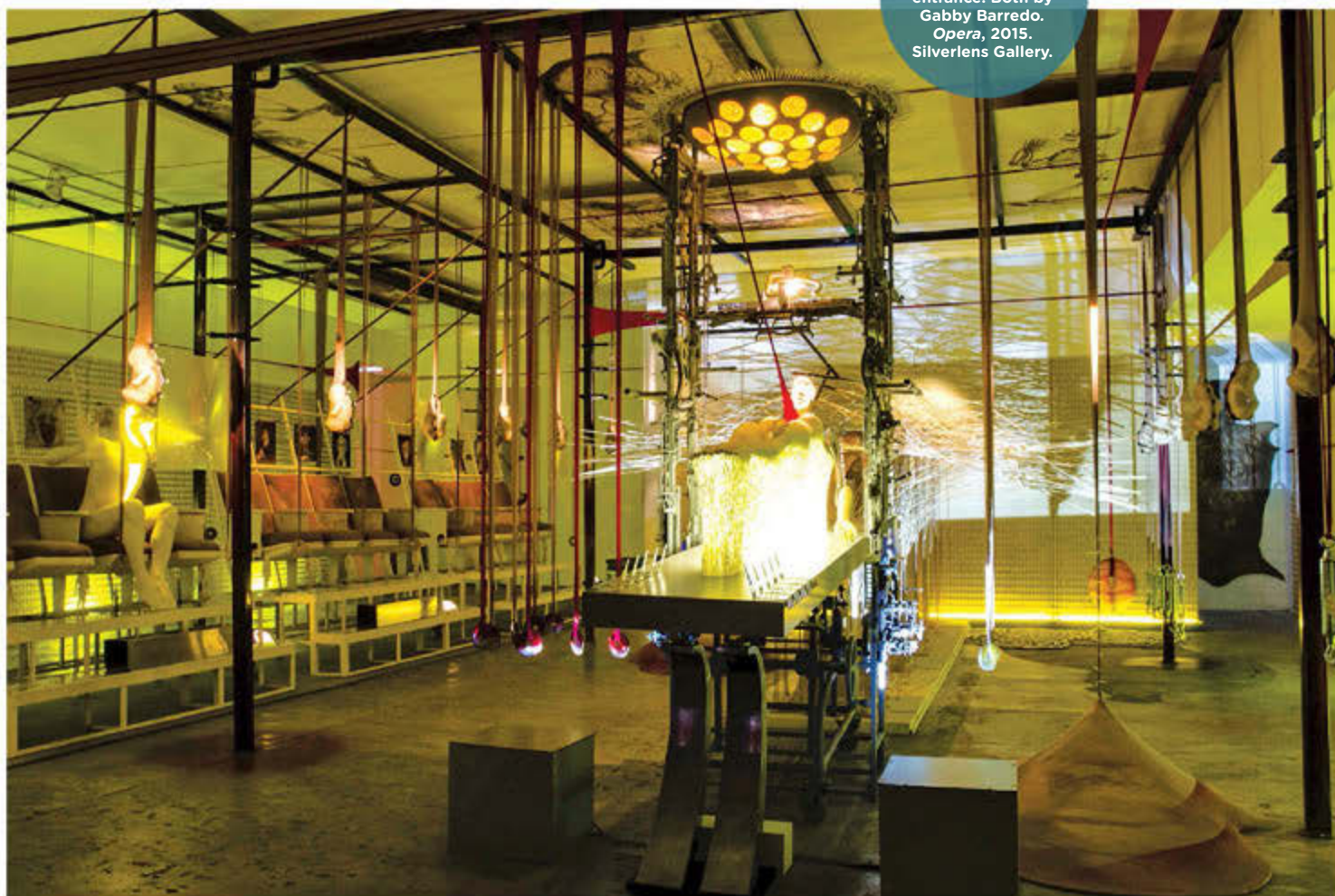
goes bare and basic with elements of life and living. Nude pictures, fetuses in their mild state, a cleaned up dentist chair, and numerous animated installation art depicting the functioning human body system. All these clue you in on the feeling of newness, and the bliss of curiosity, insecurity, and naivete of youth.

It is only after studying both themes that you are reminded of *Anima & Persona*, Barredo's exhibit at Hiraya Gallery in 1999. In this past exhibit, the artist put up a human art form in its bareness as the highlight of his show. This is obviously a lingering theme in his present work.

Finally, despite the simplicity of the themes of life and death, Barredo treats *Opera* as a darker, heavier follow-up to *Asphalt*, his exhibit at the Art Fair Philippines 2013 that was later bought by luxury goods group Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy and the LVMH Museum in Berlin. While *Asphalt* bore more religious, cultural, and political themes, *Opera* draws in a more universal appreciation of the intrinsic nature of humanity. Both are beautiful and grotesque. —with Anna M. Rosete



ABOVE:
Dental chair.
BELOW: Stadium
view from the
entrance. Both by
Gabby Barredo.
Opera, 2015.
Silverlens Gallery.



'The Tattooed Women of Kalinga'

JAKE VERZOSA DOCUMENTS
THE LAST REMAINING
PEOPLE WHO USE TATTOOS
AS MARKERS OF VIRTUE

BY PATRICIA TUMANG
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF JAKE VERZOSA

Portrait
of Marcaboy
E-bador (b. 1927,
Brgy. Butbut,
Tinglayan) taken
in 2012 by Jake
Verzosa.



IN THE MOUNTAIN VILLAGES of Kalinga, where rice terraces hug the misty peaks of the Cordilleras, tattooed Kalinga women posed for individual portraits for Manila-based photographer Jake Verzosa. Over the course of three years, Verzosa trekked to these remote villages to photograph female Kalinga elders and their elaborate tattoos, which appear in the new book *The Tattooed Women of Kalinga*, published by Silverlens Galleries.

"The main purpose is to document the last remaining people who use tattoos as adornment and to hopefully reverse the changing perception of beauty among the Kalinga. The tattoos used to be a symbol of beauty, wealth and honor but now, most see them as ancient, barbaric and a stigma," says Verzosa.

In earlier times, Kalinga men had tat-

toos to signify their warrior status, usually achieved through headhunting, a practice that became obsolete when Christianity reached the region in the late 20th century. Also a rite of passage for Kalinga women, having tattoos were meant to attract potential suitors.

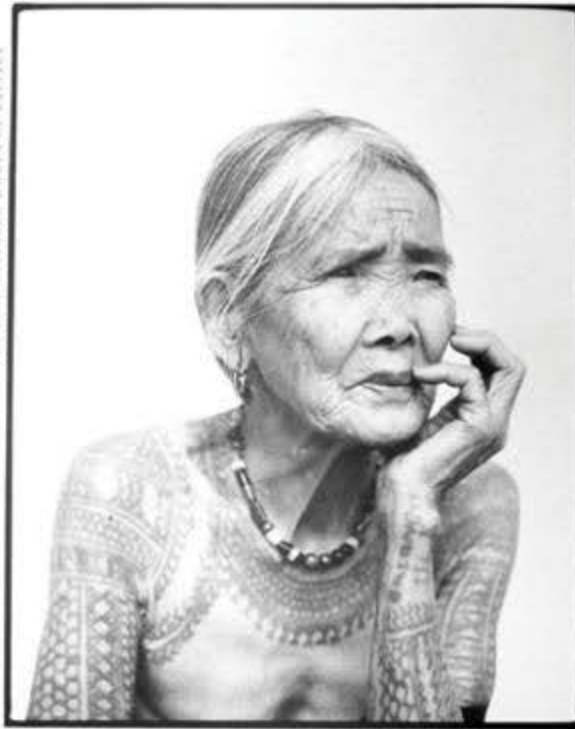
However popular today among tourists that get inked by Fang-od Oggay (also known as Whang-Od)—the oldest Kalinga *mambabatok*, or tattoo artist, who lives in Buscalan, Kalinga—the practice of traditional tattooing among the Kalinga is a dying art. Once a marker of identity, traditional tattooing is mostly viewed by the younger Kalinga generation as painful, unnecessary, and not conforming to prevailing Western standards of beauty.

Armed with a Pentax 67 camera and Neopan 400 medium format film, Verzosa embarked on this photography project in

2010 for personal reasons. "As a photographer who grew up in the region, I thought that this project has to be done. If not me, who else will [do it]? I just thought of publishing a book after I felt I had enough material," he says.

With a first edition of 500 copies, the book made its debut at the prestigious Paris Photo 2014 and was recently unveiled in Manila at Art Fair Philippines 2015. Some of the 40 portraits presented in the book have been previously exhibited in Copenhagen, Paris, Singapore, Amsterdam, Tokyo, and Manila. While Verzosa's white background decontextualizes the women from their natural context—as compared to those taken by the renowned Filipino photographer Eduardo Masferré, whose searing portraits of Igorots in the Central Cordilleras depict them in their everyday surroundings—it also

© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd, *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 103–110



'The Tattooed Women of Kalunga' can be purchased at Silverlens Galleries, located at 2/F YMC Building 2, 2320 Don Chino Rocas Ave. Extension, Makati City 1231, Philippines; tel. 816-0044. Visit www.jakeverzosa.com. Photographs are on exhibit from March 26-April 25.



Nature has always been an important element in Valinge life and livelihood. It provides a link to the constant and the eternal. Younger Valinge in traditional and modern women's attire may no longer be found but through tattoos can still speak to their descendants. Many designs for women are inspired by nature like trees, fish

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A Fresh Slate

THE NEWEST ART MANAGEMENT TEAM IN TOWN, SLATEMANILA, IS SET TO REDEFINE THE YOUNG ART SCENE

BY LEAH PUYAT

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF SLATEMANILA



ABOVE LEFT:
Ygon the Wunderkid
by Gromyko Semper,
2014, 2014. Acrylic, ink
and gold leaf on canvas.
ABOVE RIGHT: *Islander*,
by Jonathan Benitez,
2014. Sand and acrylic
on canvas.



MILLENNIALS ARE OFTEN DERIDED as an “ADD (attention deficit disorder) generation” who are addicted to instant gratification and allergic to the daily grind. Fortunately, this is another media cliché that can easily be disproven. In fact, this new generation could be the most entrepreneurial, unfazed by traditional business models and structures.

Bambina Jacinto and Danielle Osmeña are two such enterprising individuals. As the founders of SlateManila, a start-up art management firm, they held their first exhibition in November 2014 at the A Space Gallery, and are now meeting with venture capitalists eager to invest in their pioneering effort. “I definitely want to be doing this

for the rest of my life,” declares Bambina, with the conviction and determination that belies her twenty years.

Art Start

As a young child, Bambina drew constantly and so she knew at an early age that she would live a life surrounded by art. “From a very early age, I was always meeting creative people, and that was a big influence.” But the members of her family are mostly in business, so they convinced her that a business course would always keep her in good stead, even if she eventually decided to go full time as an artist.

She chose to major in Entrepreneurship at the University of Asia and the Pacific. “I



CLOCKWISE
FROM ABOVE LEFT:
The Flight of the Crow,
by Jared Yokte, 2014.
Oil on canvas. *Sorbetes*,
by Norlie Meimban,
2014. Acrylic on canvas.
Space Travel, by Isobel
Francisco, 2014. Oil
on canvas.

am so proud of my classmates; they have not waited for graduation to set up their own businesses so that gave me the drive to try it out, though the night before our own event, I was thinking, ‘No one will come, why would they?!?’” But her fears were unfounded, and they opened to a full house, with plans for two more events already in the pipeline.

How did it all start? “Whenever I would meet young artists, I would be so surprised that they had no plans to get a gallery to represent them after graduation. Even those from UP Fine Arts, which could be considered our top arts program, were not taught how to handle their careers. They were not told of such a concept as art management; so that’s where I realized we could come in. We could create a buzz around these young artists and introduce them to collectors and gallery owners, and help them jumpstart their careers.”

Themes and Variations

The exhibit notes from SlateManila’s first event sum it up best: “Each artist contributes a unique perspective to the genre of surrealism with a unified picture of the progress of movement as a whole.” The exhibit’s title *Nuova Praeternatum* is quite a mouthful, but their definition makes the exercise intriguing and inviting. It is understood to be what lies between the natural and supernatural. It springs forth beyond the surface and is found to be rooted in man. “The pieces we present to you reflect this through their interpretation of man and the world that surrounds him.”



The ten young artists chosen for this maiden effort were Jonathan Benitez, Sayid Cedicol, Gromyko Semper, Isobel Francisco, Norlie Meimban, Miko Sandejas, Josue Mangrobang, GaoRezaga, Melvin Guirhem, and Jared Yokte.

The success of SlateManila’s first event has made Bambina even more excited to

hone her skills. “I really want to learn more about art history and art management. I want to apply to the docent programs of the museums in the States. When we were doing all the work, it didn’t feel like work at all!” ■

Visit www.slatemanila.com

Twitter: [@slatemanila](https://twitter.com/slatemanila)

Instagram: [@slatemanila](https://www.instagram.com/slatemanila)

Hospitality by Design

A HOT LIST OF VACATION DESTINATIONS THAT WILL GIVE YOU DESIGN IDEAS IN MAKING YOUR HOME FEEL LIKE A PERFECT STAYCATION

Le Coq Bleu (Luh Cock Bleh)

- Literally means “The Blue Rooster”
- A French-inspired cottage located just 6 kilometers from Baguio’s famous artery, Session Road. Tucked in a neighborhood surrounded by pine trees, it is open for homestays of guests from around the world, via Airbnb.

Amenities

- Le Coq Bleu has a loft, suite, and trundle bed placed in the living room that can accommodate a maximum of 10 guests. One room in particular was built against an existing rock boulder, giving it an organic character unlike any other. “The guests simply love it, especially the washbasin set in a narrow gap within the boulders,” says owner, French transplant, Chantal Pangilinan, who personally designed Le Coq Bleu with the help of her son, who is himself a professional designer.
- There are intimate nooks that look out to the garden, perfect for quiet mornings or afternoons of reading

- Light up the fireplace on cold nights or simply for a night of fun roasting marshmallows.
- Breakfast and other meals are available upon request.
- The cottage has a garden filled with flowers and herbs.

Create the look

“French homes always reflect the personality of the owner. It looks lived in, not staged to impress,” explains Chantal. Getting the French cottage look can be achieved by incorporating these basic elements:

1. Display silverware, crystals and other collectibles in an armoire with glass panels that covers a good portion of an entire wall. “French people in general love to collect and display their collections in artful ways. Our homes are a showcase of who we are, where we lived, what we love,” says Chantal.
2. Have a color theme that is reflected throughout the house. Le Coq Bleu carries Santorini blue for its walls and ceiling complemented with soft furnishings that play on

the medium blue shade such as cobalt.

3. “No French home is without flowers,” says Chantal. Organic elements are a must to capture the cottage feel. Avoid décor or furniture that are made from vinyls or fake leather, she stresses.

4. Create intimate spaces where natural light can come in and allow one to peek at the greens outside. Such nooks must be inviting enough for an afternoon tea or coffee.

5. Creating intimate spaces apply to the garden as well. An outdoor table and chair for two will do and, to complete the look, Chantal is quick to suggest “lots of flowers and fresh herbs.”

6. Finally, give your little cottage a name. “In France it is common to name one’s house, whether it is a cottage or a castle,” says Chantal. “For Le Coq Bleu, I wanted the name to reflect both me and my husband, and what could be more French as well as Filipino than the rooster?”

By Dahl Bennett / Photographs by Jar Concengco

A salakot and a rag doll adorn the Santorini blue door in Le Coq Bleu. Quaint French table implements are set on top of a rustic Filipino wood table.





The height of the pitched roof that crowns the living room is complemented by large, arched windows with wooden frames. These let more than ample light into the space.



LEFT: Also painted blue, the stairway leading to the second floor is festooned in greenery. Sampaguita glass and an antique altar table are elements that infuse Filipino flair. RIGHT: A window that looks out to a garden lush with herbs and flowers complete the French experience in Baguio.



The Manor (The Man-or)

Situated at 5,000 feet above sea level, The Manor at Camp John Hay offers a splendid view of Baguio's natural beauty and bounty.

Amenities

- This four-storey structure is nestled within 246 hectares of Baguio's most beautiful tract of prime land.
- It has 177 rooms, including 52 well-appointed suites.
- All the rooms are equipped with modern amenities such as Wi-Fi internet access, cable TV, IDD/NDD phone system, a fully stocked refrigerator, hot/cold shower, electronic in-room safe, coffee- and tea-making machine and electrical outlet (220V).
- It also offers other services and facilities such as room service, shuttle service, sightseeing tours, babysitting services (by arrangement) valet parking, car/van rental and taxi service.
- It features a Piano Bar, a cozy sitting lounge beside the fireplace at the lobby, where you can enjoy fine piano music while sipping your favorite cocktail to accompany light, savory hors d'oeuvres.

- Le Chef at The Manor, a restaurant near the lobby area with renowned Billy King at the kitchen helm, offers a wide range of local and international dishes and fine wines as well as fresh Baguio produce like the crispy greens and freshly picked fruits and herbs and live marine delicacies from nearby Dagupan.
- Beside the restaurant is the Le Chef Delicatessen, where the comforting aroma of freshly baked breads and pastries lace the air.
- A Business Center, an 18-hole par 69 golf course, a spa, an indoor recreation hall, eco-trail and picnic grounds are available for the guests.

Create the Look

Designed by Architect Carmelo Casas, The Manor has a cozy, Filipino-Colonial interior that blends neatly with the environment of the City of Pines.

1. A mixture of brick and wood walls can instantly recreate the warmth and coziness of a vintage cabin. Match it with wooden floors and furniture pieces to make the inte-

rior look more aesthetically cohesive.

2. Brighten up the space with colorful and patterned accents in the form of pillowcases, rugs, table runners, etc. You can also incorporate pops of color through vibrant, fresh flowers, which also lend a room a refreshing, summery touch.

3. Use area rugs to define spaces and add drama through patterns and designs.

4. Pay special attention to lighting. With the dark tones of the materials, ample ambient lighting is a must. For the lighting fixtures, choose those which are made of rustic or natural materials to complement the space.

5. Make your bedroom more conducive for a staycation by using wooden shuttered doors that open to outdoor patios. Then dress up the space with a quaint and colorful table setup, where you can have breakfast or afternoon snacks.

6. Add a touch of luxe with posh metallic accents, like candelabras, bowls, accent tables, to provide a stylish contrast to the heavy-looking elements of the space.

By Grace Libero-Cruz / Photographs courtesy of The Manor

The Manor at Camp John Hay tucked in the City of Pines has a Baguio stone exterior finish, shingled roofing and tinted glass windows that lend the go-to accommodation an overall warm and cozy look.





ABOVE: Taking a cue from the style of The Manor's Le Chef restaurant, design your lanai or veranda by using a mix of bricks, woods and tiles. BELOW: To offset the darkness of your wooden furniture pieces, set them against walls in a subdued color.



Palayupuy (Pa.la.ū.puy)

- The annex to Ilocos Norte's heritage resort, Sitio Remedios in Curimao, Ilocos Norte, developed by Dr. Joven Cuanang.
- Also the word for "sea breeze" in Ilocano, a Philippine dialect spoken in the Ilocos region, Baguio, La Union and some parts of Pangasinan and Zambales.

Amenities

- *Ragsak*, the main house in the property, features two bedrooms with canopy beds dramatically draped with cotton fabric that billows in the lazy afternoon breeze. The rooms share a common living room and a patio, which overlooks the West Philippine Sea.
- The second house in the property boasts of four bedrooms. Each can house four people at a time.
- Paluyupuy offers authenticity as the ultimate luxury. Take part in the afternoon *daklis*, where fishermen haul in their vermilion nets from the sea. Each person who helps in this endeavor can partake of

the daily catch.

- Behold the collection of contemporary Philippine art, the most noticeable being the sculptures by Perry Mamaril and terracotta figurines by Roberto Acosta, which are strewn about the property.
- Snuggle in beddings that are made of 100% Ilocos cotton, hand woven by artisans of the area.
- Wi-Fi is available in the nearby heritage resort, Sitio Remedios.

Create the Look

1. Make use of local materials such as *damili*, the Ilocano terracotta from the San Nicolas, Ilocos region, used for the ubiquitously rich and red Vigan tiles. Likewise, its elevations are made of local corals, which are not endangered.

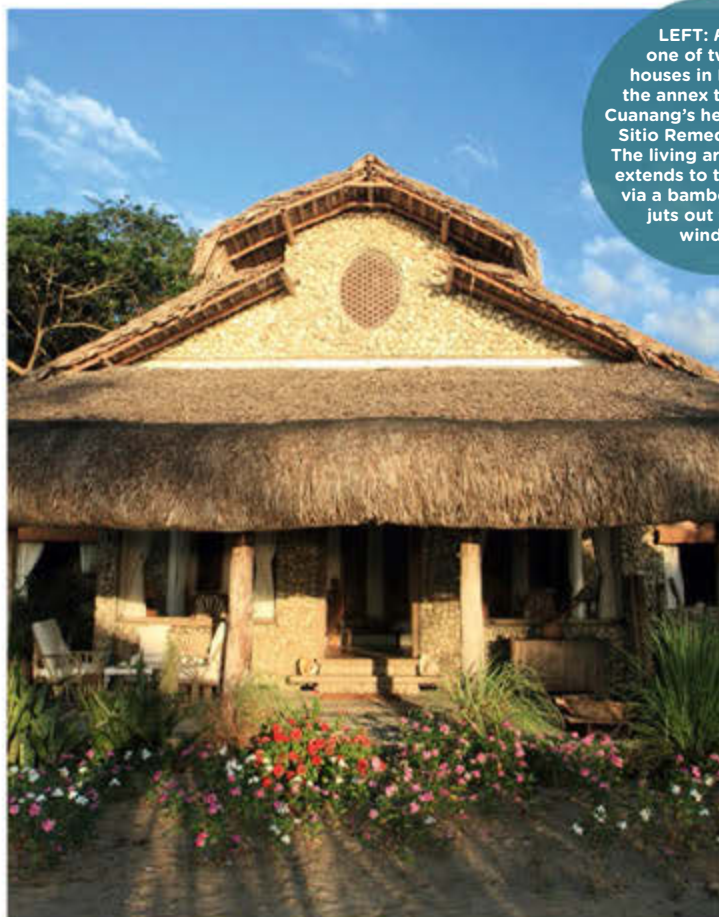
2. Judiciously employ local handicraft traditions by exploring how they can be adapted to your resort home. In *Ragsak*, the *induyan* or cradle, made of rattan in a pattern reminiscent of a scaled up *solihya*,

was used to cover the acrylic of the oval windows in its elevation.

3. Reference indigenous textile traditions in tile and stone patterns. Here, Architect Rex Hofileña rendered the *binakul*, a pattern unique to the weaving of *inabel* textiles, in pebbles and stones on select portions of the floor.

4. Introduce dramatically scaled contemporary sculptures into your space and explore the local contemporary art scene for memorable pieces that will amp up your home's appeal as a refuge of escape and character.

5. Read up on local architecture, and study where you can incorporate design elements that are uniquely Filipino such as the *banggerahan*, traditionally, an extension to the kitchen used for drying plates and cooking utensils. In Palayupuy, the same concept was incorporated, but its use was transformed into an outdoor bed or rest area. **By Anna M. Rosete / Photographs by Jovel Lorenzo**



LEFT: *Ragsak*, one of two guest houses in Palayupuy, the annex to Dr. Joven Cuanang's heritage resort, Sitio Remedios. RIGHT: The living area in *Ragsak* extends to the outdoors via a bamboo bed that juts out from the windows.





ABOVE: The bedrooms in the second house boast of a material palette that showcases the best of the region: Vigan tile floors and woven cotton *inabel* fabrics. BELOW LEFT: A sculpture by Roberto Acosta holds court on the coffee table in a living room that looks out to the West Philippine Sea. BELOW RIGHT: The architecture makes use of local corals and rattan weaves in the home's elevation.



The Yellow Doors (Yel'.lō Dörs)

A cozy, rustic and story-filled hostel literally built from the ruins of Typhoon Yolanda

Amenities

- The Yellow Doors Hostel (YDH) has two private and two dorm rooms that can accommodate up to 22 guests at any given time.
- It has a terrace that overlooks the admirably resilient Tacloban City. This is where guests can enjoy a cold beer and exchange stories. Says Lucia Palamis who owns the hostel together with brother Jacques, "We're hoping to set up a mini stage for live acoustic performances. We also have a bookswap corner that keeps growing as guests keep adding to the collection. We do have one rule: no E.L. James, please!"
- YDH, which is close to van and bus terminals, is accessible to some of the country's untouched natural spots.
- One of these is Kalanggaman Island, voted this year as the No. 1 sandbar in the Philippines.

Create the look:

When the unforgiving Typhoon Yolanda struck Tacloban in 2013, it hit the Palamis residence hard. They had to move to an apartment, and the first thing they did was to paint its main door yellow, just like the door of their parents' house. "(It felt) as if by restoring the color yellow in the door of our new 'home,' we might restore things elsewhere," muses Lucia.

Jacques and Lucia adapted the same yellow doors for their hostel, which was renovated from an abandoned building. It is now a cozy refuge for volunteers and tourists alike. Its interiors are filled with witty art and charming décor, a beautiful testament, as Lucia aptly puts it, "that it is possible to rise from the ruins."

Let your own space tell a story with these tips:

1. Find inspiration in the most unexpected places such as junk shops, roadsides and abandoned backyards, says Lucia. "It's not so much where to look but how to look at

a thing outside its traditional element."

2. When choosing which piece to upcycle, think of what you're not using anymore but can't seem to throw out. "That's the first indication that it's worthy of being stored and kept," says Lucia.

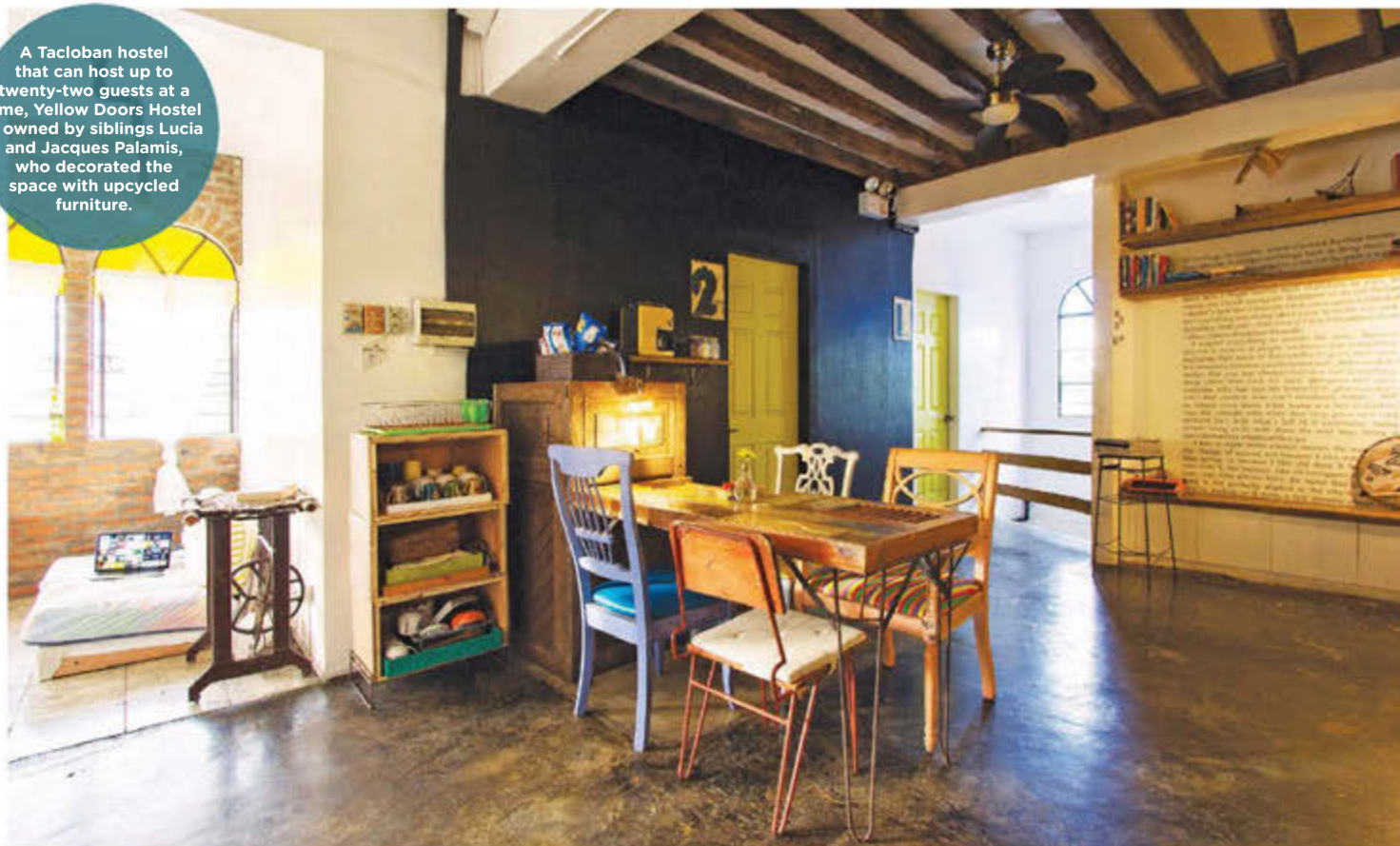
3. Collaborate with artists. YDH is a collaboration of different local and Manila-based artists, says Jacques. This openness results in an evolving space that contributes to its unique personality.

4. YDH added humor and wit by hand-painting writings on the wall with lines like "Go outside" and "Read more books." This look works best on bare walls in big, airy rooms, says Lucia. "It creates a focal point and can immediately make a large space seem cozy."

5. Doors are not restricted to the color of wood. Give it a jolt of color and see how everything about the space instantly changes in attitude and character. *By Dahl Bennett/*

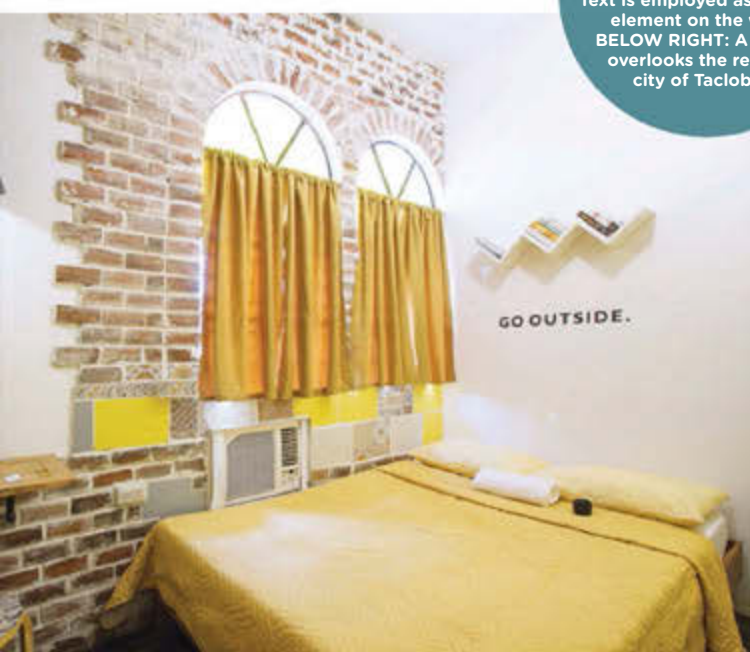
Photographs Courtesy of Yellow Doors Hotel

A Tacloban hostel that can host up to twenty-two guests at a time, Yellow Doors Hostel is owned by siblings Lucia and Jacques Palamis, who decorated the space with upcycled furniture.





ABOVE: Brick walls, upcycled furniture and accessories lend an industrial appeal to Yellow Doors Hostel. BELOW LEFT: Text is employed as a design element on the walls. BELOW RIGHT: A terrace overlooks the resilient city of Tacloban.



The Henry Hotel (The Hen'-ri Ho'-tel)

- Say Cebu, and a vision of sea, sky and sand comes to mind. Cebu is often associated with a trip to Cebu with a stay in a beach-side resort. The Henry Cebu challenges that well-worn notion.
- A graphic black and white building in a residential part of Cebu rather than its busy downtown or the shores of Mactan. The lobby is an eclectic (yes, it's overused but it truly applies here) mix of vintage and industrial elements such as tapestry-inspired sofas, antique looking toys, giant pop art paintings and fun sculpture.

Amenities

- The hotel restaurant, Rica's, features giant dining chairs that make you feel as if you have stumbled onto a movie set reminiscent of scenes from *Alice in Wonderland*. The colorful and bold design somehow encourages equally lively conversations and verbal exchanges. The heightened sense of the atmosphere perhaps also taps into our inner theatrical personas.

- Of the top three hotels featured on Trip Advisor in the Cebu area, only The Henry Cebu is a boutique hotel and the other two are part of multinational chains.
- Spacious rooms, each one lovingly designed. In fact, rooms are not billed as Regular or a Junior Suite, but rather as Big, Large, X-Large and XX-Large. Themes range from bucolic as a vintage beach cottage to dramatic such as Marilyn Monroe. And if your eyes need respite from all the visual stimuli, step out by the pool, with a pretty veranda and mini vertical garden.

Create the Look

1. Find the common thread amongst the different eras of design, e.g the rawness and industrial feeling of the concrete floors and the exposed piping have a corresponding unfinished edge with vintage looking toys and aged fabrics.

2. Play with scale. Oversized pieces add a uniqueness that is both memorable and visually dynamic.

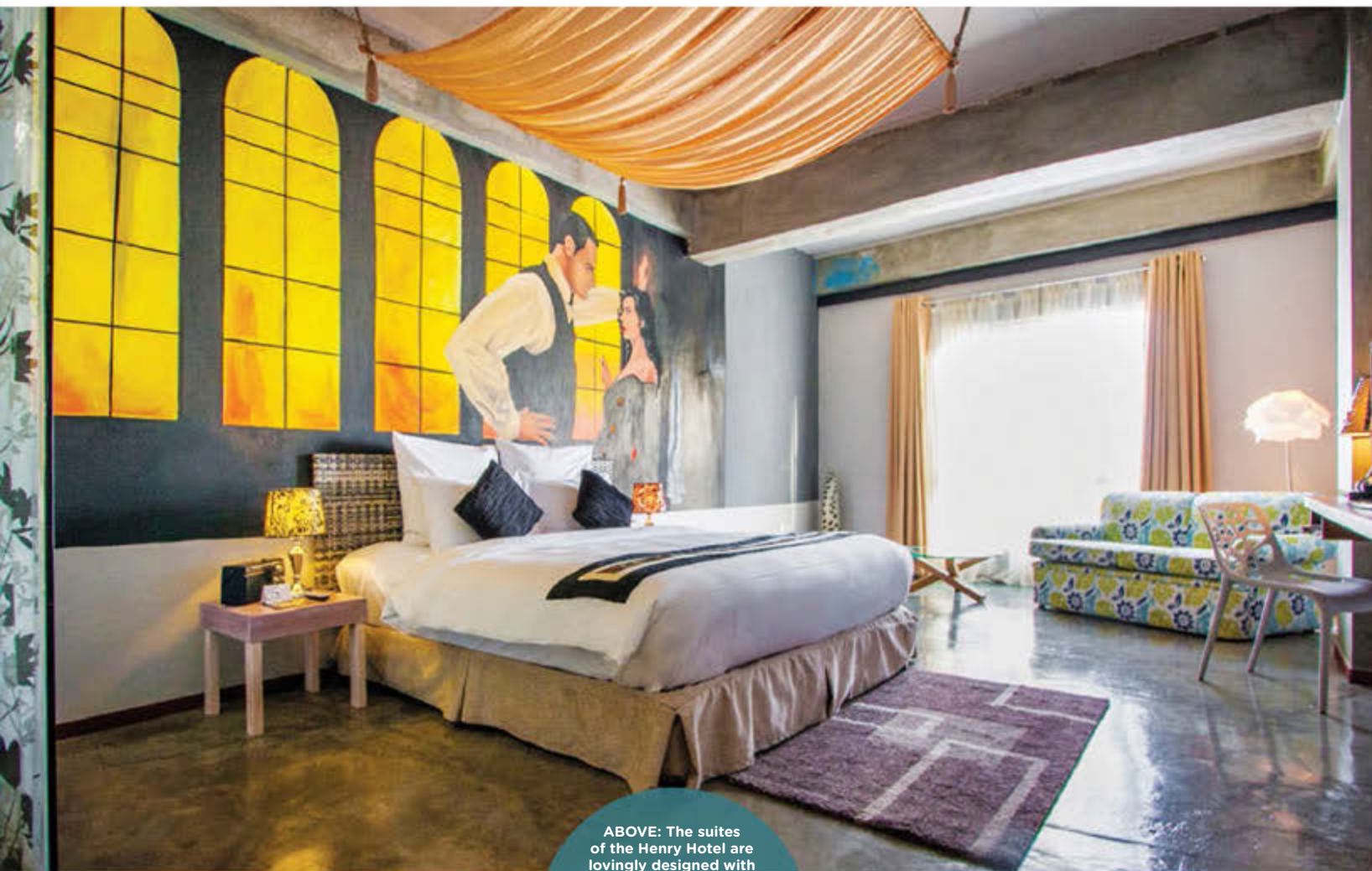
3. Let art take center stage. The pop art murals and the vintage ads in the hotel bar are easy ways to make a space feel like a lived-in, curated interior.

4. Incorporate the past into your decorating scheme. In Henry Hotel, a vintage Beetle stands at the entrance of The Scrapyard, the hotel's bar and lounge. Old ads paper the walls of the bar. The second floor function room also acts as a mini gallery of the Pop Art works of Delphine De Lorme, a French artist who used to live in Cebu and now has moved to Myanmar. Her works feature Roy Liechenstein-like renditions of icons ranging from John Wayne to Manny Pacquiao, and the saturated colors of the comic strip-like figures with post-Modern references are collisions of time and pop history.

5. If you tend towards a quirky style, don't seek to define what it is. Express yourself through your home's decorating details. And enjoy yourself. **By Leah Puyat / Photographs courtesy of the Henry Hotel**

The lobby of the Henry Hotel Cebu is replete with vintage appeal. Overscaled furniture is juxtaposed with raw concrete and lively pop-inspired art.





ABOVE: The suites of the Henry Hotel are lovingly designed with whimsy. BELOW LEFT: The Henry Hotel Cebu "mascot," a red resin sculpture in a greeting pose, imbues the space with character. RIGHT: Uniqueness is the reigning design principle in The Henry Cebu. Rica's, its lobby restaurant, is no exception to this.



The modern tropical look is achieved by Milo Naval in Siam Hotel, a Sorsogon retreat.



Siam (sha-ma)

- A modern, tropical hotel in Sorsogon named after Lolo Siam, the grandfather of Milo Naval's wife, Kat.
- Conveniently located in Sitio San Lorenzo in Sorsogon City with easy access to adventures offered in the area: whale shark interaction in Donsol, swimming in the pink beaches of Matnog and the hot springs of Irosin, and kayaking in Lake Bulusan
- Also means *Ama*, God, father

Amenities

- Siam is a modern 40-room designer hotel with service at par with the best hotels.
- All bedrooms free of digital amenities such as Wi-Fi and television for that much-needed "digital detox." However, Internet is accessible in the common areas.
- Features a 25-meter "modern forest pool" that subtly sits in the middle of the estate. Verandas in the premier rooms overlook this calming view.

- Picnics or outdoor dining allowed in the sprawling Zen gardens.
- Features an indoor restaurant.
- Includes shuttle service.

Create the look

Siam is a showcase of modern, tropical, Asian, and organic design. This is how its award-winning designer, Milo Naval, intended it to be. The general rule in doing tropical designs in the Philippines, he says, is that "we always have to think of wide windows, balconies, slanting roof, and materials such as wood and other indigenous materials relative to the place." Get the Siam feel and look with these tips.

1. Adapt an 'indoor meets outdoor' layout where views of sprawling gardens are visible from almost all angles. Siam features this best in its wide, open spaces that allow access to the gardens from the rooms and common areas.

2. Get Naval's organic yet modern aesthetic with pieces of modern-shaped furniture that feature traditional weaving such as the *solihya* lounge chairs and rattan ottomans used throughout Siam. For table tops, use solid slabs of wood like narra in natural finish to contribute to the elegance of an area.

3. Wooden sunscreens have a significant impact on the overall tropical look of a space. Siam's sunscreen slats are made from a local wood called *Luktob* usually used in making boats.

4. Demonstrate the use of natural and organic textures for both interior and exteriors. To complement them, Siam used raw cement finish for the walls.

5. To achieve the modern forest look of Siam's pool area, surround your own with lush tropical greens punctuated by jutting palms.

By Dahl Bennett / Photographs courtesy of Milo Naval



ABOVE: The sunshades are made from *lukto*, a local wood used to make boats. LEFT: A concrete massing is complemented by warm wood. RIGHT: *Solihya*, a Philippine style of weave is dramatically scaled in the bedroom.



Luxe Living

SOLAIRE RESORT AND CASINO
REINVENTS THE LUXURY GAMING
NICHE WITH FILIPINO FLAIR AND
WORLD CLASS STANDARDS

BY LEAH PUYAT

BY ITS VERY NAME, Solaire evokes the grandeur and glory of the famed Manila Bay sunset. “Solaire is the French word for ‘solar’ but we also chose it because in English, it incorporates the words for sun and air,” reveals Joy Wassmer, Director for Public Relations for Solaire Resort and Casino.

The lobby for the Sky Tower, the all-suites luxury wing of this bayside mecca, calls to mind a giant solarium with glass ceilings reminiscent of a conservatory that lets the sunshine in brilliantly. A lush grouping of indoor tropical gardens and an imposing green wall add to the sensation of entering a giant greenhouse. Toni Serrano Parsons designed the flower arrangements, and her trademark style of seemingly romantic randomness juxtaposed with symmetrical structure adds intimacy to the grand scale.

The VIP check-in process is a breeze, no long lines, and a quick and yet gracious welcome straight to your suite. The light-

ing fixtures in the corridor of elevators were designed by Kenneth Cobonpue and they resemble coconut fronds dotted with fireflies. The colors in the suites are neutral and muted, punched up with touches of matte gold. The sense of luxury whispers rather than screams. By the bed is a jewelry box of gray shagreen for convenience. The view is of a picturesque topiary garden and a bird’s-eye perspective of the lobby’s glass gables.

Brighter than the sun

Just as we were about to be lulled to an early siesta, Joy called us and said she would meet us for lunch. We were given a choice of a Chinese meal or a Mediterranean repast. Waterside, the all-day bar and café with a grand view of the poolside and the bay, seemed a more scenic choice. Everything on the menu sounded so scrumptious, and so it took us a while to order. When we got ordering out of the way, we began to chat. It

wasn’t really a strict interview, as the vibe at Waterside is so laidback and languorous, that all formalities just seemed to melt away.

Joy says with equal parts pride and respect, “Mr. Razon, whom we call ETK (ports magnate Enrique Razon, founder and head of the global conglomerate International Container Terminal Services, Inc. with holdings, operations and representatives on every continent except Antarctica, and Bloomberg, the group that owns and runs Solaire), wanted to get into the tourism industry because he believes that the Philippines has so much to offer, from beautiful scenery to beautiful people, who speak English almost as if it was

A soaring perspective of the Oasis Garden Cafe, in Solaire Sky Tower, where the array of cakes concocted by Chef Josef Teuschler is a feast for all the senses; and the bright and airy ambiance of a traditional solarium provides a respite from the daily grind and the feeling of sitting in a country garden.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF
SOLAIRE HOTEL RESORT AND CASINO

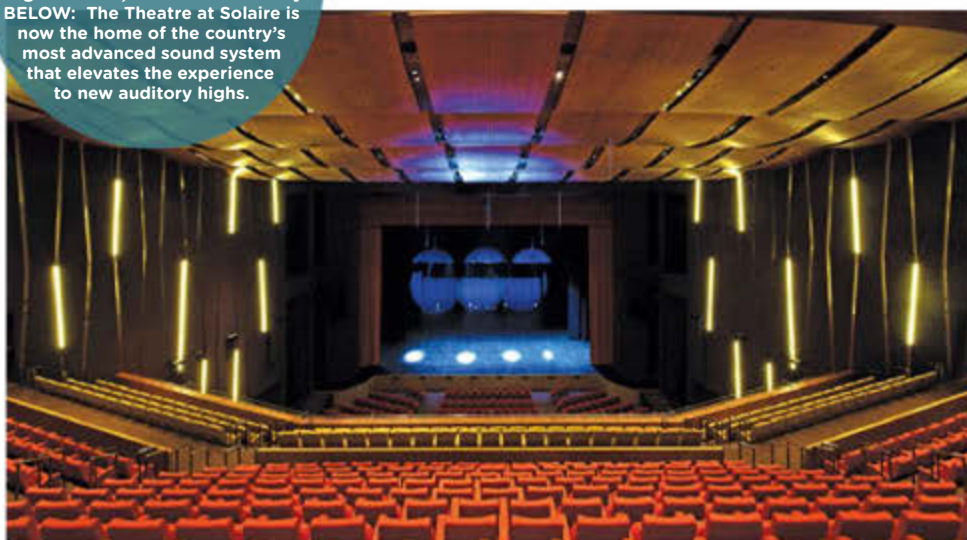


ABOVE: With the famed Manila Bay sunset as a backdrop, the Filipino-owned and conceived Solaire Resort and Casino stands proud on Aseana Boulevard, in the capital's most dynamic neighborhood, Entertainment City. BELOW: The Theatre at Solaire is now the home of the country's most advanced sound system that elevates the experience to new auditory highs.

their first tongue. He saw that tourism could make a difference in the country, and he really wanted to do it as a Filipino brand. That's why there are Kenneth Cobonpue screens in this restaurant and the lighting fixtures as well near the elevators; and BenCab sculpture in the Sky (Tower) lobby. The whole idea is built on Filipino hospitality."

Solaire opened to much funfare two years ago with the tagline, "Brighter than the sun." In August of 2014, the Theatre at Solaire was unveiled, and it now boasts the most modern sound system in the country. Also, late last year, the Sky Suites opened to the public. "We got requests for more suites. Soon, we will start the second phase (of development)," Joy says.

At sunset, the realization comes that it is truly all about the view. Whether the bayside





ABOVE: Italian cuisine in a setting that exudes a fresh take on elegance, Finestra also offers a view of the poolside and the bay. BELOW: Waterside Restobar features Mediterranean cuisine best for sharing with family and friends, as well as an extensive cocktails selection.



TOP TO BOTTOM: The imposing water feature and vertical garden by the Oasis Garden Cafe is a favorite spot for Instagram posts and selfies. One of the most popular go-to of food lovers is the Chinese restaurant Red Lantern. The suites at Solaire's Sky Tower are all about quiet luxury and rich, sensual textures for a contemporary take on sleek and urbane.

vista is seen from one's suite, at a banquette in Waterside, or right by the pool, the expanse of sea and sky is transportive and transformative. Though it is just minutes away from the hyperkinetic metropolis, one feels a world away, and the body, mind and spirit go into reset mode. The many concerns and countless worries somehow go on the backburner and a lightness of heart and soul infuses one's being.

Strip down

Dining at the Strip, we met Chef Eric Turgeon. He grew up in Canada, in his parents's small hotel, and so he was quite literally to the manor born. He resisted the culinary industry, but somehow ended up a chef working in Paris, South America, and the Middle East until he was called to open Strip, Solaire's steakhouse. He doesn't want to box in the menu at Strip, and says, "I don't want to think that our menu is just a steakhouse menu. I really wanted to just give our diners the best."

As a first-timer to Strip, I decided to order the tasting menu of eight courses, and it was a true sensory journey. Each course was carefully presented as a piece of art, especially the appetizer courses. The *piece de resistance* was the main course, smoked striploin. Succulent beef was placed in a jar and smoked with cherry wood chips, and so as the jar was opened, fragrant smoke rose from it, and as I took in the intriguing scent, it made me feel as if I were in a magic forest.

The waiter knew the wine list so well and was wonderfully helpful with my choice as I am absolutely no wine expert. The wine list is perfect for newbies like me, with succinct but more than sufficient descriptions, to help select wines to perfect the dining experience. Joy later told us that Strip carries roughly 500 kinds of wine, and maintains a stock of about 9,000 bottles. But it's not all about quantity. Wine Spectator awarded Strip their "Best of Award of Excellence" for offering interesting wine selections. The essence of the list was curated by Wine Manager Gerald Savigny.

At Solaire, one completely loses track of time. And that is part of Solaire's magic. There is that feeling of being away from the nitty-gritty of daily life, right in the middle of our very own capital city. ■



To Seoul and Beyond

SOUTH KOREA IS A CREATIVE POWERHOUSE, RICH IN TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRACE LIBERO-CRUZ

A trip to iconic, neofuturistic landmark Dongdaemun Design Plaza is a must when in Seoul. Designed by world-renowned architect Zaha Hadid, DDP has a total space of 85,320 sq. m. so allot at least half a day to explore the venue.



ACCORDING TO THE KOREA TOURISM ORGANIZATION, 434,951 Filipino tourists visited South Korea in 2014. With the mainstream popularity of K-Pop music, Korean novels (or Korean drama series) and the so-called Hallyu Wave (or Korean Wave, which refers to the increase in the popularity of the South Korean culture) in the Philippines, this number doesn't come as a surprise.

South Korea's capital, Seoul, much like its Japanese counterpart, Tokyo, has a beguiling appeal that stems from how it efficiently marries traditional with contemporary; its historical sites sit proudly and blend well in the landscape of modern infrastructure and lifestyle.

For first-time travelers and diehard "Seoul-oists" alike, the hashtags #Seoul-Searching and #SeoulMate are never just rhyming words and casual references; they're about finding a place which, notwithstanding the language barrier and cultural differences, brings a sense of belongingness and respite.

Despite the freezing temperature when we were there, strolling around Seoul proved to be an enjoyable experience, what with each street and area teeming with creativity and carrying an interesting character and personality that are both visually delightful and intellectually engaging. In fact, Seoul was designated in 2010 as a UNESCO City of Design. According to www.unesco.org, "The city is a good example of a design-driven, creative city with its vision to become an eco-cultural city based on advanced IT infrastructures."

For a hefty dose of vivid inspiration that can spark, reawaken or nourish your artistic side, here are must-visit places in and out of Seoul:

Dongdaemun Design Plaza

LOCATION: 281 EULJIRO-DONG, JUNG-GU, SEOUL

Absolutely hard to miss, this massive neofuturistic landmark serves as the main attraction in Dongdaemun, a popular fashion hub and tourist destination. Designed by world-renowned Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid in collaboration with Korean firm Samoo Architects & Engineers, the Dongdaemun Design Plaza features five halls: Art Hall, Museum, Design Lab, Dongdaemun History & Culture Park, and the Design Market. Interestingly, the façade's look changes





ABOVE: About 20,000 white roses that are designed with LED lights fill the rooftop of the Dongdaemun History & Culture Park. BELOW: Along the route to the Naksan Park, you'll pass by the "Lovers" art installation by Jang Seonwhan. The charm of the Naksan Park comes from a vibrant mix of off-beat murals and cafés that are definitely eye candy.

depending on the lighting conditions and season because it is designed and engineered with a field of pixilation and perforation patterns. A venue that promotes international cultural exchange, it also serves as a launch pad to inspire Koreans to continuously showcase innovative designs and creations.

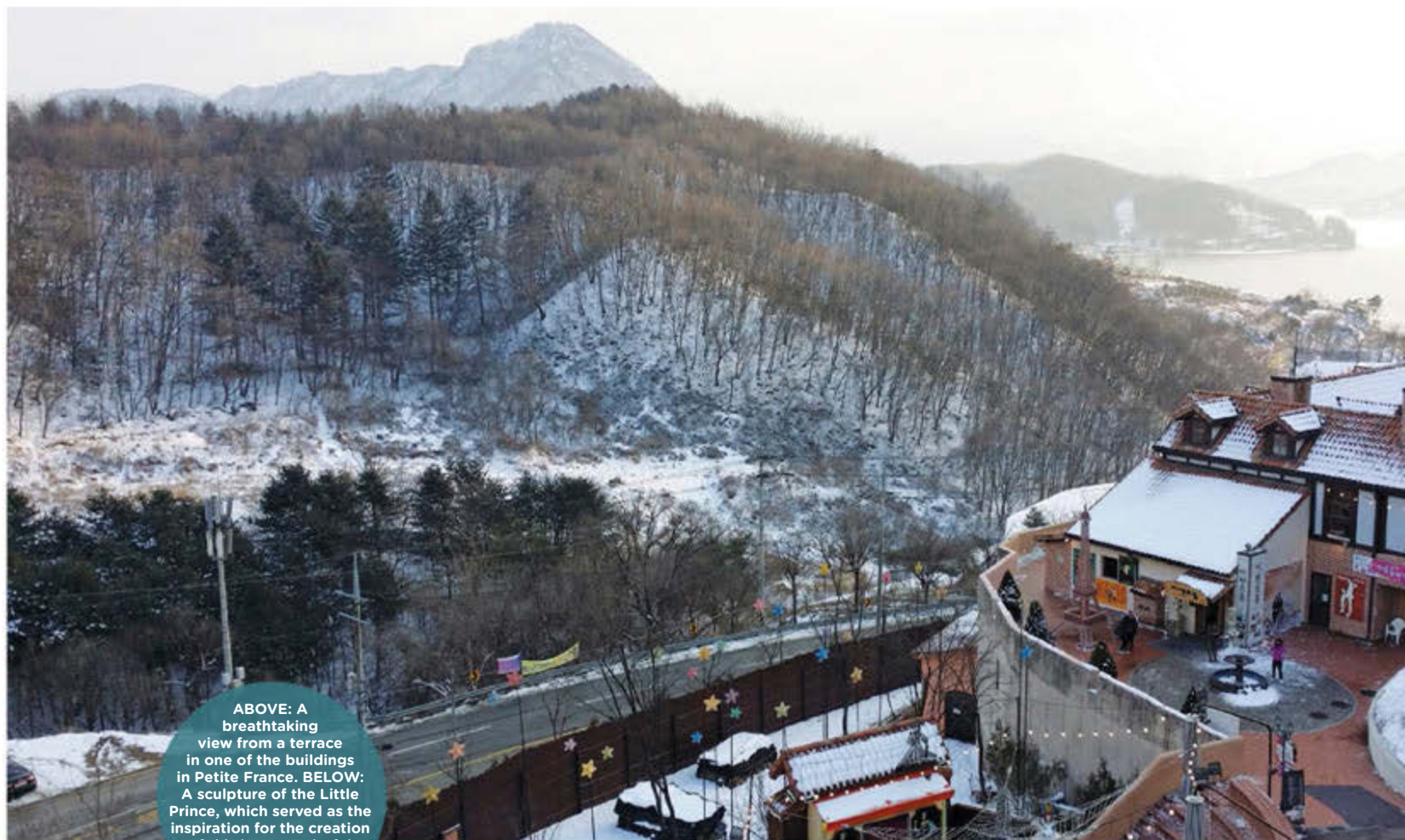
My favorite part here is the Dongdaemun History & Culture Park because it seamlessly merges modern, sleek structure with nature. We saw, against a bed of grass, this scenic display of about 20,000 white roses, which are actually made of LED lights that are turned on from sundown till 10 p.m.

Naksan Park

LOCATION: 54, NAKSAN-GIL, JONGNO-GU, SEOUL

Thanks to the Korean drama *Rooftop Prince*, I knew about this place. In one melo-dramatic scene, the characters wandered around streets filled with art installations, murals, and decorated walls and houses. I was so curious about where that place was, so I Googled it and found out that it's Naksan Park, which is located on a solid granite bedrock mountain. (The name comes from its camel hump-like appearance; "nakta"





ABOVE: A breathtaking view from a terrace in one of the buildings in Petite France. BELOW: A sculpture of the Little Prince, which served as the inspiration for the creation of this happy, colorful French village in South Korea.



means camel and “san” means mountain). I devoted time to visit this beautiful area, and though it was tiring, the experience of being immersed in such an artistic culture was well worth the trek.

In 2006, The Naksan Art Project was established by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as part of its “ART in the City 2006” campaign. The Dongsung-dong district, where the Naksan Park is situated, is home to poorly developed housing and buildings, that’s why one of the goals of the project is to improve the look of the area through an artistic and cultural makeover. Even the roads leading to the Naksan Park feature creative surprises, and wherever your eyes land, you’re sure to find an interestingly quirky detail.

Petite France

LOCATION: 1063, HOBAN-RO, CHEONGPYEONG-MYEON, GAPYEONG-GUN, GYEONGGI-DO

Another favorite filming location of Korean dramas is this quaint French village on a hilly side in Gyeonggi-do province. It is about an hour’s drive from Seoul, but we

went there via the ITX train. Prior to going here, we passed by the picturesque Nami Island first, and from there we took a taxi going to Petite France, which cost us around P800.

It got its name from the well-loved, best-selling classic *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. This is one of the three permanent exhibits in the world in honor of this enduring novella. The other exhibits are in the Air and Space Museum in Paris, France and The Museum of the Little Prince in Hakone, Japan. You’ll know you’ve reached Petite France once you see a cluster of colorful buildings. Take a day trip, or spend a night in one of its 34 guest houses.

There are several exhibits you can check out here: 1. Saint-Exupery Memorial Hall; 2. France Traditional House Exhibit Hall; 3. Orgel House (where a 200-year-old music box plays a sweet melody); 4) Europe Puppet House; 5. Antique Exhibit Hall (also features sculptures and paintings of *le coq gaulois* or the Gallic rooster that is the national symbol of France); 6. *Beethoven Virus* Film Location; 7. Puppet Theatre; 8. Fountain Square; 9. Petit Event Hall; 10. Marionette exhibition; 11. Butterfly Park; and, 12. Petite Terrace.



ABOVE: The sleek unit of the main male character in *My Love From the Star* features a lounge area, where a large telescope serves as one of its unique elements. BELOW: The female lead's unit is a standout for its sophisticated use of different prints, patterns and textures.

My Love From the Star Special Exhibition

LOCATION: KINTEX 2 OUTDOOR SPECIAL EXHIBITION - 408, HALLYU WORLD-RO, ILSANSEO-GU, GOYANG-SI, GYEONGGI-DO (DAEHWA-DONG)

Formerly held at the Dongdaemun Design Plaza, this special exhibition is in KINTEX (Korea International Exhibition Center) in Gyeonggi province. The exhibition period started on September 5, 2014 and will be shown until the end of August this year. Following the incredible success of Korean drama *My Love from the Star*, this special exhibition shows the exact replicas of the two main characters' homes. The show is about the out-of-this-world romance between an alien (who looks like a man) named Do Min Joo and the Hallyu diva Cheon Song Yi. Aside from giving visitors the feel of being in their homes, the exhibit also features the props and technology used during filming.

Both characters have a noticeably elegant taste in interior design, making the set visit more enjoyable. Do Min Joo is timid yet smart, traits that may be mirrored in his predominantly white high-ceiling place. Cheon Song Yi, on the other hand, gets to translate her bold and outspoken personality through bold patterns and prints, shiny metallic, sparkly sequins and luxe furs spread all around her unit.

This may not be my first time in Seoul, but you see, such is the charm of this place: one trip is not enough to see and experience its different facets. I already cannot wait for my next South Korean adventure. ■



Shop and Dine Here

IN SEOUL, YOU WILL FIND FUN RESTAURANTS AND CAFÉS AND UNIQUE FASHION, BEAUTY AND HOME ITEMS

GAROSU-GIL. This gingko tree-lined street may only stretch up to less than a kilometer, but it is one of the must-visit places in Gangnam. It has a cool ambiance as it is filled with a series of artistic and stylish shops. Some say it's Seoul's version of Soho. This, I must say, is one of my favorite areas in Seoul, where I was sure I wouldn't go home empty-handed.



SAMCHEONG-DONG. I just recently discovered this area, and I'm glad I did. As the Visit Korea website perfectly puts it, it's "where tradition and modern artistic sensibilities meet." The area is famous for the Bukchon Hanok (Korean traditional houses) Village. It's fascinating and impressive how these beautiful houses are maintained. But the other face of this area features hip and trendy cafés, shops and galleries that cater to people of all ages. Here, it is calm, quiet and not crowded, so strolling is enjoyable and hassle-free.



INSA-DONG. This is the place to go for a taste of traditional Korean culture and crafts. Here, you can try on the *hanbok* (traditional clothing), *hanji* (traditional paper), traditional teas, pottery and folk crafts. Dominated by Dohwawon (a place of study for painters) during the Joseon Dynasty, this 700-meter-long street continues to be a hub for artists and art lovers alike. Check out Ssamziegil, a unique shopping spot with over 70 shops, including handicraft stores, souvenir shops, art galleries and restaurants, and dubbed as the "Special Insa-dong Within Insa-Dong."



• A PINCH OF •

Portia

homes



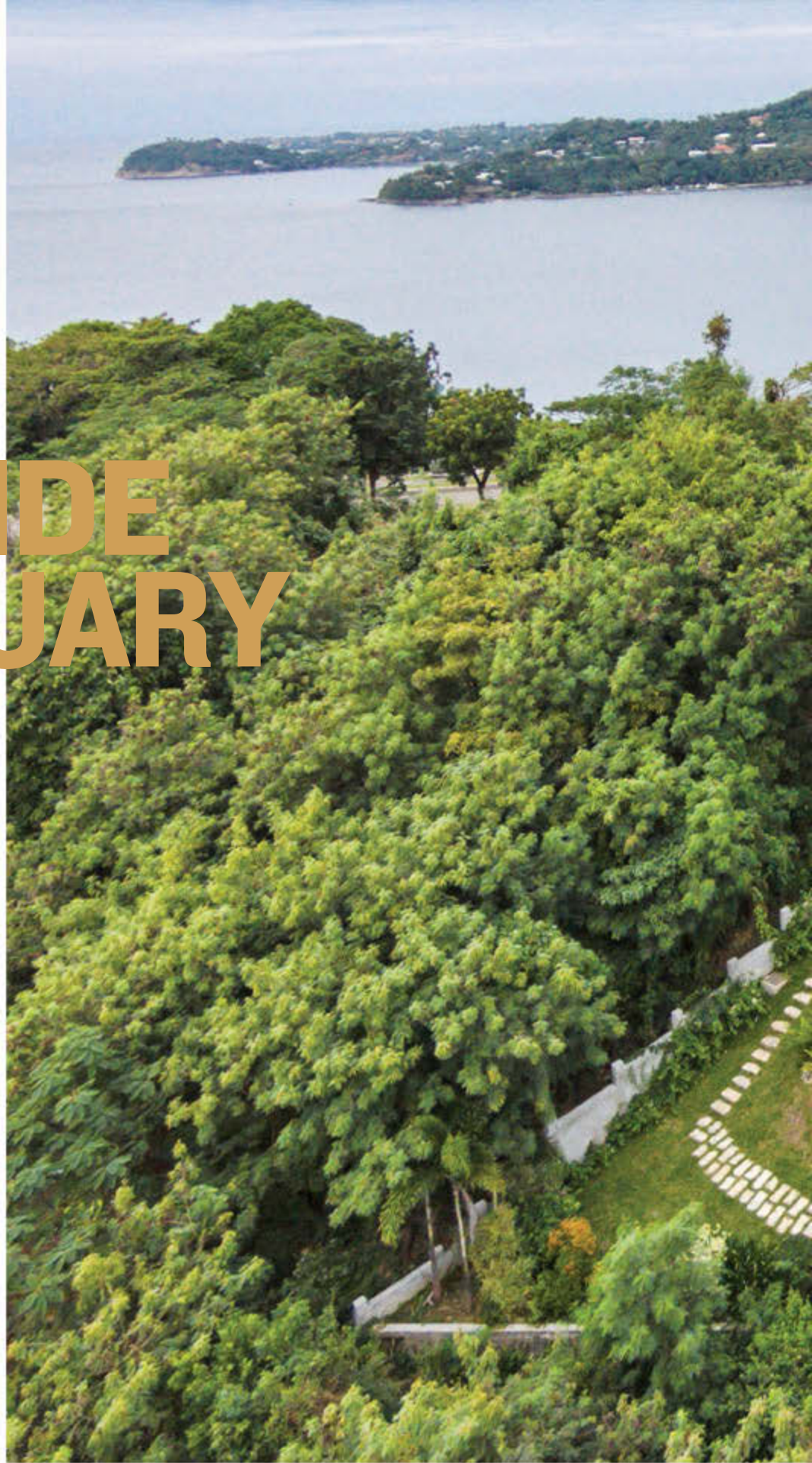
A Seaside Sanctuary, p. 58

A SEASIDE SANCTUARY

A CASUAL KIND OF
POLISHED RUSTICITY
DEFINES THE
CONTEMPORARY
BEACH HOME

BY LEAH PUYAT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO





A birdseye view of *Capitano*, a vacation home of a family bound by a love for entertaining and the mystical pull of the sea. A passion project of a devoted daughter who also is finishing her interior design studies, this home bridges aesthetics and brings people together. An atypical beach home, it accesses an urban vernacular that is sleek and contemporary while it remains open to the majestic view of the natural beauty surrounding the hillside perch.



The homeowner made sure to include established and new Filipino design forces to forge a fresh interpretation of a tropical home. The contrasts in textures and visual weight, from the graceful jewel inspired stools, to the chunkier wooden pieces, bring a dynamic look that is still ultimately homey and relaxing. RIGHT: The homeowner and designer Cara de Ocampo combines a love for interiors and a yoga practice; these twin passions have resulted in a home full of meditative spaces as well as a home meant for gathering people together.



IF A FAMILY HOME is about the ebb and flow of mundane reality, the weekend home can be about fantasy and escape. Design schemes can be more experimental, more audacious, as the home is not meant to be a mere machine for living, but a chance to let the mind wander and the soul to soar free.

Capitano, a sleek beach home nestled above Batangas' most picturesque swimming cove, is such a haven. It made Cara de Ocampo, the homeowner, a happy wife, homemaker and yoga teacher, brave enough to dive head-on into the design field. "I have always loved interior design. My work on *Capitano* really convinced and made me decide to take up Interior Design at PSID. Eight years ago, when I got married, I enjoyed doing our new house and I had such a wonderful time that over the years, I would volunteer to assist when my friends had decorating needs. But when my mom asked me to take charge, that's what got me into it formally."

Country home for city folk

"I knew my parents weren't exactly beach people so I made sure that the design would still have a modern city feel," confesses the newly minted design student and devoted daughter. "On a vacation in Thailand, I came across a hotel called Villa Amanzi. It is a beautiful modern glass structure up on a cliff. I fell in love with it and told myself that one day I would design a house just like that!"



ABOVE: Modern versions of the ubiquitous birthing chairs and a lamp are some of the pieces from Milo Naval. Kenneth Cobonpue's Bloom chair introduces a zesty yellow to the tranquil space. **RIGHT:** The quirky lighting fixtures over the indoor pool evoke idiosyncratic marine life. **MAIN PHOTO:** "My parents are actually city people, so I still wanted that urban feeling though it is a beach house," confesses Cara de Ocampo, and this is evident in this tableau that is minimal and unfussy in its layout and design elements.









FAR LEFT: Lighten up. The Philippe Starck Ghost chairs and the wood elements blend seamlessly, while the verdant landscape outside all add up to a sensation of alfresco dining, with the convenience of a controlled environment. **ABOVE:** Kitchen confidential. "I start my days there," Cara says of this cozy breakfast counter. **LEFT:** Riding the waves. The marble tiles echo the ocean waves, and whisper a quiet kind of luxe.



ABOVE: Welcome to the club. Old World references such as the globe and the model boats are made fresh by the light and neutral palette. **RIGHT:** Classic resort materials from the woven *abaca* walls and area rug meet the uber-urban chrome accent chair, which add up to a bedroom suite that makes sophistication a restful option.

Though the inspiration was a Thai hotel, the actual furniture and pieces are still mostly Filipino. “I have always admired Filipino furniture designers and made sure to showcase them by sourcing furniture from all over the country. I made buying trips to Pampanga, Davao, Cebu and Manila. We got pieces from Kenneth Cobonpue, Janina Dizon, Vito Selma, Dedon, Far East Furniture, Milo Naval, Blue Carreon Home, W17 and Cura V.”

When asked to pick her favorite pieces, she reveals, “The Kenneth Cobonpue Yoda bar stools add texture to our modern kitchen. I usually sit and have breakfast here. A wooden sculpture I found at Cura V has a raw feel to it, and I use it as storage for all my travel books, another one of my passions. And the Janina Dizon stingray tables add a touch of fun and glamour.” These are her favorite pieces, but her favorite part of the home is the deck. Days begin and end on the deck. “We take in the sunrise and the sunset.”

To see is to believe

“Our family loves to entertain, and so I designed *Capitano* to have a lot of open spaces for lounging. The idea is to make our guests comfortable and appreciate the natural beauty of Kawayan Cove. It was to this end that I took advantage of the lot’s location by designing a suspended pool to overlook the beach. I used mostly glass to give ev-









Pooling resources. The pool deck is the favorite spot for a meditative sunrise to a partying sunset happy hour, and is a crowd favorite amongst the beloved friends and family who are fortunate enough to be invited to the magic universe within *Capitano*.

everyone an appreciation of the natural beauty around the house,” the homeowner shares.


With an easy and candid smile, she reveals, “When friends enter, I usually hear a ‘Woooooooooow!’ I must admit that the view from the living room is really breathtaking.

“Seeing my stepdad and mom happy with my work is probably the most fulfilling. They gave me creative freedom with this home. They were so easy to work with. Although they couldn’t really say no to my requests!”

The family home is now an informal clubhouse for the community. “Most of our neighbors are also dear friends so we enjoy spending the weekends together. Ever since this house was built, our weekdays have been getting shorter and our weekends longer. The most rewarding part is seeing all my hard work come to life, and friends and family enjoying the space and creating lasting memories with them.”

The home’s name *Capitano* is a tribute to a family ancestor who was a sea captain, and it is an apt evocation of the sea’s hypnotic call. As the majestic and mesmerizing ocean invites friends and family to gather, the home stands witness to a family’s most beautiful hopes and dreams. ■





The grand entrance leads up to the main living area which is a treasure trove of arts and crafts from all over the world. This area opens up to the veranda where the eye rests upon an unencumbered view of the ocean.

A PLACE OF PLENTY

A SPECTACULAR BEACH HOUSE REFLECTS ONE WOMAN'S BOLD ORIGINALITY AND VISION

BY MARISSA LOPA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



A STRONG INDIVIDUAL STYLE helps people focus on how they want to live and the image they want to project. Judging by Thelma Guericke's beach house in Punta Fuego, Batangas, she is clearly a woman who lives large and makes no apology for it.

Thelma Guericke and her husband have been married 40 years. They raised their two kids in the U.S and now have four grandkids they love to spoil. They call California home, but toward the end of the year, they will divide their time between their Punta Fuego beach house and their Alfonso, Cavite mini vineyard.

Grand and off-beat

Walking through the grand entrance of the Punta Fuego home, first time visitors can't help experience a bit of a shock. The spectacular view of the sea is a sight to behold, certainly, but it is the interior's effect that is both grand and off beat that impresses.

The entrance opens up to the living room, which is an enormous space flanked on either side by a winding ornate stairway leading up to the second floor where the private quarters are located. Two large red structural pillars draw the eye to the full height of the house. The long sofa and Indian side chairs are bravely covered in bold fantastic colors and patterns of black, white and red. The glass-topped coffee table base is made of a gigantic piece of naturally gnarled wood that had to be brought into the house before the walls of the main entrance



An informal living area, features woven floor pillows and low tables on exotic rugs. Delicate Murano glass chandeliers purchased from a closing out store in California brighten the ceiling. LEFT: Corners of Interest: an oriental Buddha painting on wood is a perfect backdrop for a converted Indian cart strewn with pillows.

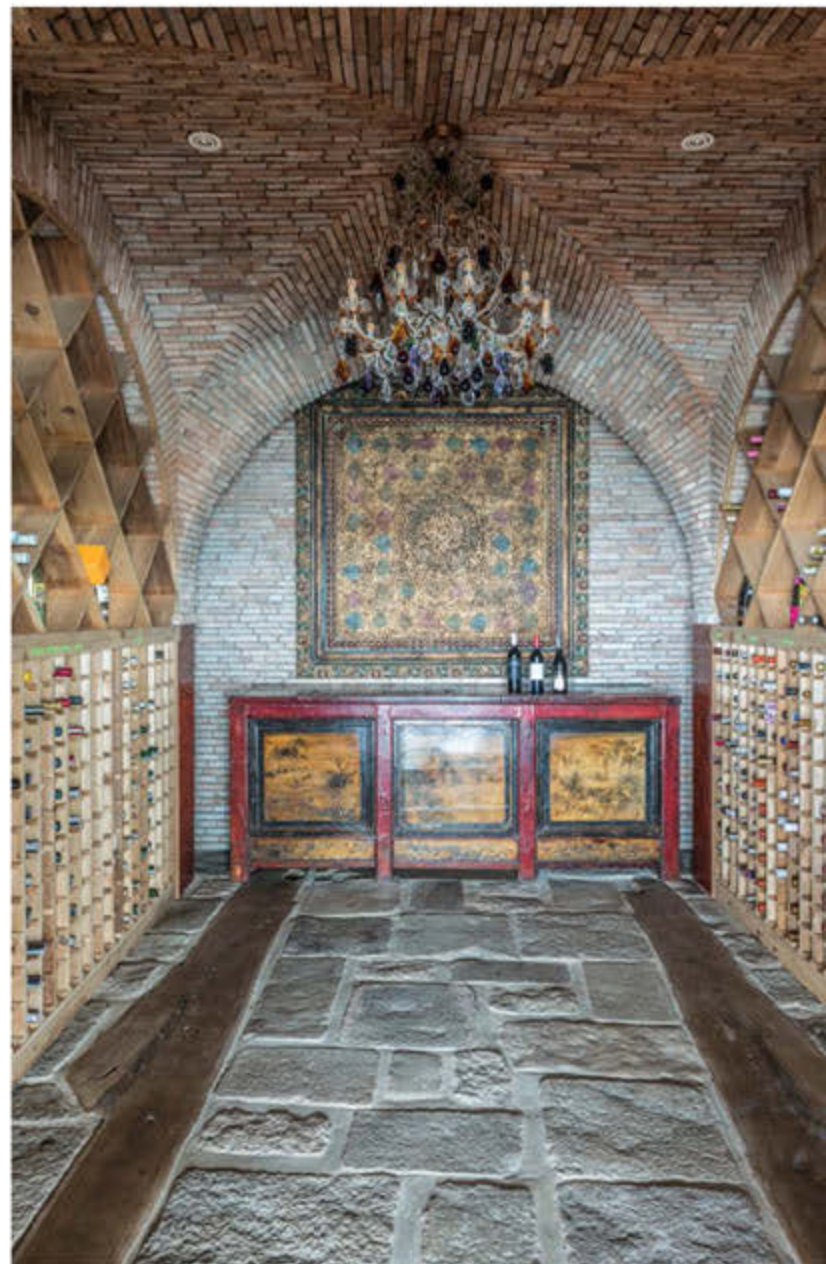




The formal living room has an impressive pair of long rectangular, thick solid pieces of wood tables, which are the perfect foil for the high backed leather English chairs.







LEFT: The rustic kitchen is where the family gathers for informal meals. The old beams lining the ceiling were found in Quezon, submerged under a running river, hence the honeycomb like surface.

ABOVE: The temperature controlled wine cav is where their impressive collection is stored and maintained all year long.

The master bedroom features a custom-made wood carved Indian *Kama Sutra* headboard.







A European themed guest room is a favorite of family guests because of its special views of the garden and the ocean. OPPOSITE PAGE: One of the guest rooms takes on a more ethnic theme with its bamboo and rattan bed .

were permanently closed in. Zebra skin and cowhide rugs are strewn across the floor alongside fine Persian carpets, and white jade Chinese temple incense burners hold court in one obscure corner.

The rustic kitchen is on the right end off the living room. Heavy beams on the ceiling, colorful tiled counters and a stainless steel backsplash are the stars in the cooking area. Informal meals take place in the rectangular table on the one side. Many memories were made with friends and family in this spacious yet warm kitchen.

An infinity pool is located on the lower level, supported by a well stocked sunken bar and a temperature controlled wine cav.

The upper deck terrace with an almost 360-degree view of the ocean features a Japanese Misono table for outdoor entertaining during the cooler months and evenings.

Unique rooms with a striking mix

Varieties of wood in all shapes and sizes are one of the main features of the house. The exposed beams are blocks of wood which had been submerged for years in running rivers in Thelma's hometown in Quezon, giving their surface a honeycomb texture.

The walls along the second floor corridors are interestingly lined with shelves in Indian woodcarved frames. They swing open like closet doors and cleverly hide storage space for linens and such.

Thelma's travels have inspired her to create unique rooms with a striking mix. There are delicately beautiful Murano chandeliers that



soften the hard edges and intricate Maranaw woven wall covers and bedcovers. The master's bedroom almost seems simple in its elegance but upon closer scrutiny, the headboard is carved with the different positions illustrated in the *Kama Sutra*.

There are no firm rules about what goes together or what is right or wrong here. If there were, all the rooms would look alike. Instead, there's a certain energy and magic captured in each of the rooms.

Style simply relies on a person's ability to choose things that suit her and put them together in an exciting way. Her pleasingly outlandish flourishes invite you to know more about her. This ode to embellishment tells the story of who the owner is, where she's been and where life's adventures will take her. ■

JUNGLE FEVER

AFRICAN VIBE MEETS CLASSIC
AMERICANA IN A TAGAYTAY
HIGHLANDS HOME

BY ANNA M. ANGARA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Tribal trends. Furniture and accessories from different continents blend harmoniously in this space. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Cabin in the woods. This home is nestled in a picturesque, evergreen landscape.





Colorful tiles brighten the wood paneled cabinets in the kitchen. OPPOSITE PAGE: Welcoming hearth. The perfect spot to relax on those chilly Tagaytay evenings.



THE LOG CABIN IS CONSIDERED an icon of American recreational architecture. Timeless and charming, it evokes rustic vacation getaways where friends and family gather in front of an inviting hearth at the end of the day. This classic mountaintop or lakeside vacation home type has been transported en masse to the highlands of Tagaytay.

Tagaytay is a hugely popular location for many vacation houses of various architectural styles. Some styles suit the landscape more than others and, of course, the most prime homes are positioned to take advantage of the gorgeous views of Taal Lake. The Woodlands development, a village of log cabins in Tagaytay Highlands, fits right in this high altitude mountain setting. An abundance of araucaria, a coniferous evergreen tree, surrounds the houses, adding to the woody feel of the place.

The log cabin

The shady porch of this log cabin and a glimpse of the double-height stone fireplace inside feel immediately inviting, especially after

a tiring day spent in the great outdoors. But the interiors of this particular cabin are not entirely what you'd expect, given its architectural style.

Tessa Prieto-Valdes' rustic Woodlands retreat is the cozy setting for this well-traveled interior designer's collection of African art and accessories. She says, "Ten years ago, my husband Dennis and I celebrated our 10th anniversary in South Africa and Botswana. We were so captivated with the landscape and wildlife of Africa that when we designed the log cabin, we thought of creating that African vibe to remind us of our incredibly amazing safari experience." From the zebra skin floor rugs and hand-painted leopard spotted walls to the cowhide covered pieces and wooden tribal accents, every corner of her home speaks of this memorable experience.

Tessa cites in particular her stay at the Mambo Camp in Botswana, one of the most luxurious safari camps in Africa, as the inspiration for the cabin's interiors. She explains that this camp, "designed with leather sofas, zebra skin rugs, wooden accents and animal skin pillows," is on top of her list for "glamping" or glamorous camping. To recreate the feel of

Earthy tones and textures dominate the dining area.

Mambo Camp, she purchased similar design elements, such as the animal skin rugs and pillows in Cape Town, South Africa.

A porcupine quill and ostrich eggs were also bought on this trip and provide interesting detail to the space. Tessa combined her African spoils with additional pieces from Teresita's in Baguio, such as wooden sculptures and vessels, and woven baskets. "It's interesting to note that there are similar aspects in design so all the pieces we bought here and abroad blend perfectly," she says. Whether it's an African ritual mask or an Ifugao *bulul*, there is certainly a similar tribal aesthetic.

Pockets of conversation areas

Tessa states, "As a designer, my personal style is bold, creative and an explosion of texture. I believe in personalizing the interiors with lots of photos and memorabilia from travels. Accessorizing is crucial to my design in order to make an impact on the overall look." This is clearly evident in her design of the log cabin. Each area is filled with layer upon layer of accessories. A collection of wooden giraffes are scattered in the various nooks next to oriental ceramics and cabinets.

The master bedroom contains a family heirloom headboard from Tessa's parents, and the adjacent loft has comfortable, classic American Ethan Allen furniture. A number of framed portraits of family and friends that date to a decade ago are juxtaposed with recent black and white photographs of wildlife taken by Dennis on their latest safari to Kenya and Tanzania.

To encourage socializing, Tessa who is ever the gracious hostess likes "to have pockets of conversation areas so guests can move







The loft provides a cozy area for both work and play. OPPOSITE PAGE: Patchwork of pattern. Various patterns liven up the walls and floor of this bedroom.



around, enjoy the space and have a different experience on each visit.” Guests will surely never run short of conversation in such a lively, stimulating environment.

Earth-toned palette

To incorporate safari colors, which is mostly an earth-toned palette, Tessa chose furniture pieces in shades of brown and bottle green. The leather sofa and dining chairs were purchased from Bates Furniture and More Than A Chair Company from Pampanga. To add shots of color and texture, she placed beaded red pillows, draped rich, multi-hued tapestries on the sofas, and hung African-themed paintings from Far Eastern Furniture, another Pampanga-based supplier.

The hand-painted walls in the living area and bedroom provide further interest, texture and warmth. Gina Bocar, a muralist who has

collaborated with Tessa on other projects such as Hotel Elizabeth and the Y2 Hotel, painted these.

To illuminate the two-story log cabin, with its characteristic soaring ceiling, Tessa incorporated French-style chandeliers and wall lights to give “a nice twist to the interiors.” She loves utilizing and playing with lighting fixtures in order to create depth and drama. These fixtures definitely put the “glam” in “glamping.”

The end result is an eclectic design mix, full of bohemian character and personality like the designer-owner. With her usual panache, Tessa has managed to blend various styles that may have seemed initially incongruous.

In Swahili, the *lingua franca* of Southeast Africa, “safari” means journey. When Tessa and her family retreat to their vacation home in the woods, they are constantly reminded of their African adventures. ■

An Anthropologie fabric-covered wing chair and yellow throw pillows in the living room add those requisite pops of color.



HOME OF ETERNAL SUMMERS

COLOR YOUR
SPACE WITH
A SOOTHING
BUT FUN FEEL

BY ANNA M. ANGARA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KURT ALVAREZ



The custom dining furniture, which can easily accommodate eight to ten people, was made for elegant entertaining.

CREATING THE FIRST HOME of this young couple in a Quezon City subdivision was a collaborative effort between the owners and designers from start to finish, thanks to similar aesthetics, open communication, and technology.

The wife, who teaches Asian History in college, says she knew what she wanted from the beginning but needed the technical assistance of professionals to help her and her husband realize their dream home. They asked Rossy Yabut-Rojales, Creative Director of Heim Interior Design, Inc., to help them transform a house built in the 1990s into their refuge in the city.

Heim, which is Icelandic for home, is a full service design firm that has “Design Made Happy. We bring color in interior design” as their design ethos. The young couple’s home seems to be the epitome of just such a design. Color certainly plays an important role in these interiors, both as a unifying element and a way to create visual impact.

Endless sunlight

Stepping inside this bright and airy home feels like it’s always summer (or eternally spring). Endless sunlight streams through the large framed glass doors. The owner explains it wasn’t always this way because the house was gloomy and dark pre-renovation. The solution was to open up the living, dining, and kitchen spaces by removing partitions and placing new glass doors and windows throughout.

For the color palette of the entire house, the owner says she asked for “black and white with pops of color” which start at the entrance with the bold red door. Inside, furniture and accessories in teal and citrus hues punctuate the light grey walls. Fresh greens, bursts of yellow and splashes of turquoise are the predominant accent colors.

The use of a lot of black was unusual as the couple is Chinese. But they also love the dark themes and gothic vibe of Tim Burton movies, and this was definitely one of their design inspirations. Rossy says she mixed in plenty of fun textures and patterns to liven up the black.

Black and white is a classic color combination that makes any room instantly chic and timeless. This combination runs throughout the whole house. Its graphic quality always makes a strong statement and is most clearly evident in the powder room’s Machuca floor tiles. The oldest tile manufacturing business in the Philippines, Machuca Tiles, Inc., produces these classic Mediterranean cement tiles, which come in a variety of patterns and colors. When blended with solid black walls and a large Venetian mirror, the patterned tiles lend dramatic flair to this small space.







The oriental area

On the second story landing, which the wife calls her “oriental area,” one encounters a canary yellow chinoiserie-style wallpaper from Dutch design studio PiP. Chinoiserie, a common theme in European art and design since the seventeenth century, is “characterized by the use of fanciful imagery of imaginary China.”

The wallpaper, whimsically called Early Bird, is very much in this vein, a tapestry of stylized birds, flowers and butterflies. Equally whimsical, the Four Great Beauties of China, a set of four round paintings by Saturday Group artist Carlo Ongchangco, hangs on the wall. These, along with the lamps and side tables, strengthen the oriental theme of the space. The wife retreats to this area for relaxation and to read books from her collection of Asian-themed tomes, which are displayed on a long bookshelf adjacent to the staircase.

Juxtaposed with the fanciful landscape are real views of the outdoors. A glass door leads to a small terrace where several plant boxes are filled with citrus trees soaking up the midday sun. Even if you’re indoors, sitting in this space feels like you’re in the middle of a garden, surrounded by nature, which has an equally soothing and stimulating effect.

Edible landscape

The owners asked their designers for an “edible landscape,” an increasingly popular and practical trend in landscape design. Although not a novel concept, the practice of edible landscaping or food gardening has grown in urban areas. It follows the basic landscape design principle of creating an attractive environment, but uses vegetables, herbs, edible shrubs and fruit-bearing trees as ma-

ABOVE: A shock of yellow brightens this whimsical reading area. **RIGHT:** The den gets the black and white treatment with this damask patterned wallpaper.





The Chinoiserie and color themes continue in the master bedroom with the striking bedspread. OPPOSITE PAGE: Smoke and mirrors. Graphic black and white are used to dramatic effect in the powder room.



terials instead of ornamental plants.

The home's front lawn is planted with a combination of herbs such as rosemary and oregano, and fruit trees like apple-mango, *dayap*, and calabash, aka the Miracle Berry Tree, which can potentially cure diabetes. You don't need a big plot of land in the countryside to enjoy this type of landscape. Seeing fruit-bearing trees and smelling the scent of fresh herbs and citrus in your backyard can transport you to a Mediterranean setting and evoke this perception of an endless summer.

All the rooms have a romantic but modern feel. To make the spaces truly unique and personalized, the Heim team also designed bespoke furniture. Standout pieces include the distinct caned-back seating for the dining area, and the wingback chair in the living room, both upholstered in shades of green. Some of the upholstery fabrics, furniture and accent pieces were purchased abroad via Amazon, Anthropologie and Swedish giant IKEA. The master bedroom conjures an atmosphere of a luxury hotel suite. The pristine white headboard with nail head trim, mirror-fronted side tables, and a zebra striped rug add glamorous touches to the space.

It took almost two years to complete the renovation but this home still seems to be a work in progress. The owners are planning to convert one of the bedrooms into a home spa, complete with massage table and soaking tub. Their home will become even more of a relaxing sanctuary and give new meaning to the term "staycation."

Now who'd ever want to leave such a house? ■

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P120



gardens



Green Traces of the City

A product of creativity, public collaboration and research, *Hunt & Gather*, *Terraria* is a book that is truly one of a kind. A project headed by contemporary artist Wawi Navarroza, she invited Metro Manila dwellers to forage for soil, plants and ephemera from various locations in the city that were arranged within terrariums and then photographed as still lifes. From site documentation photos and critical essays to illustrated manual for creating terrariums with complete catalogue of the assembled terrariums, each page will make you experience the city anew. And each fabricated tiny ecosystem will awaken your green consciousness. *You can order the book online at www.5-ports.com*



MODERN DAY MAGIC

IN THE CRUSADE TO END POVERTY, GAWAD KALINGA TRANSFORMS A FARM IN BARANGAY ENKANTO INTO A CENTER FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND VOLUNTEERISM TO CREATE A MOVEMENT FROM POVERTY TO PRODUCTIVITY, AND DISGRACE TO DIGNITY

BY LEAH PUYAT / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAULO VALENZUELA







ON THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD to the GK Enchanted Farm, there is a high stretch of road that offers a panoramic view of the Angat River. It's a glorious, absolutely green sight, an Amorsolo painting come to life. This untouched, flowing river, devoid of giant billboards and factories on its banks, is an apt precursor to the GK Enchanted Farm. After a quick stop at the souvenir shop at the entrance of the Enchanted Farm, Jerick Limoangco, the personable and eloquent Executive Assistant of Gawad Kalinga founder Tony Meloto shows us the way to the bamboo nursery. Mango trees abound everywhere, reminding us of an old-school romcom where the sweet but headstrong farm girl falls in love with the jaded but lonely scion/city boy.

The maverick thinker

We meet the visionary Tony Meloto, and we sit at a table underneath the trees. All around us, farm workers are laying down the grass and plants, and carrying in bamboo beds meant for the first bamboo villa. He doesn't speak in a loud voice, but his words carry all the zeal of the maverick thinker that he is. A revolutionary like Mao Zedong, who seeks to shatter the centuries-old thinking that the poor must rely on merciful doleouts, and yet also a practical realist like Deng Xiao Ping, who recognizes the power of big business, Meloto believes that by harnessing the resources of big business and restoring the innate dignity of the marginalized, the Philippines can finally achieve authentic so-

LEFT: A roof of one's own. A Nipa shed that can be a resting place, or an impromptu office, flanked by age-old mango trees. **RIGHT:** We came here for the view. A sweeping view of the Angat valley, from the balcony of one of the Bamboo Villas.



A tree grows in Bulacan. One of the 800 mango trees that are a wonderful part of the enchantment at the GK Enchanted Farm.





Too cool for school. One of the schoolhouses of the on-site university that aside from traditional subjects offers focus on social enterprise, global affairs and learning French to prepare for scholarships to French schools.

cial and economic progress.

"I wanted to show you a place that is still a work in progress," Meloto says. "We Filipinos love to see the glossy finished product, but I wanted you to see the process. We respect the creativity of the poor, many of whom are considered unemployable, perhaps because of a past record or a lack of education. But here, we recognize that they know that the farmers can teach what native plants work together. So we plant the anti-snake and anti-rodent plants, such as dill, lemon-grass and citronella.

"These bamboo villas that you see, which overlook this valley, have a great view of part of our 800 mango trees and the valley below. We don't cut the existing trees, and the existing water lines. From traveling around the world, we bring the ideas back home. For example, the furniture for these bamboo villas are made by craftsmen who live nearby. The different villas will be connected by bridges that can also be used as viewing decks. We can invite people here for team-building or maybe just a different kind of holiday.

Meloto pauses for a minute and a wry smile comes over his face. "This summer, we will offer camps, and the fees from the paying participants will subsidize the participation of the poor kids. It's so ironic that rich parents are willing to leave their kids here, without protection, because they feel safe that their kids are living amongst the poor. But in the city malls, they don't feel that their kids are safe."



Wandering near the bamboo nursery, where a variety of pretty and picturesque varieties of bamboo grow, waddle the fattest, happiest, most photogenic chickens you ever saw. Their feathers are more fabulous than any Parisian couture creation, and they are a mix of breeds that are local, French and Israeli. After strolling amongst the bamboos, we head for the Animal Farm. But this is no malevolent Orwellian enclave. Duck, turkeys, and geese cluck about contentedly; lambs, goats and pigs live in pens that do not stink as in other commercial ventures. Cornmeal is mixed with the feed, which help eliminate the odors.

Self-sustaining operations

The livestock is part of the farm's self-sustaining operations. The duck eggs are harvested everyday and are part of the daily menu. French business student Louis Faure proudly shares with us that the farmers taught him how to kill the chickens by hand, and these are sent to the kitchens. Meals are eaten in common, much like in an Israeli kibbutz.

"We are inspired by the kibbutz model," Limoangco says. "Though *Tito* Tony once quipped that while Israel created abundance from the desert, we have made a desert from our abundance." The farm also has

The seed of an idea. Young medicinal plants and tree saplings, all ready to grow. **RIGHT:** Might for right. One of the Shell Villas, made possible in tandem with the energy giant, is open for team building or family holidays. These villas will be near a future Aqua Museum.









LEFT (INSET): Homework. Handcrafted bamboo plant holders. **RIGHT: Houseproud.** This pretty house is actually the workshop of Plush and Play, a viable and vibrant export enterprise of plush toys named after Filipino celebrities such as Manny Pakwan, Apple d'Ap, and Coco Martin. The mothers who live in the village can sew at home, and thus still attend to their families as they augment their incomes. The toys also enable children to have truly Filipino toys, as opposed to plastic Western diversions. **OPPOSITE PAGE (CLOCKWISE):** A green mind. A trellised walkway, near the common eating area; Garden variety. A vertical garden, offers a moment's pause for reflection. Or an entire afternoon, if one has the time; Bamboozled. A sliver of the exquisite bamboo nursery; Veg out. The hydroponic vegetable greenhouse.



a spa with a charming café, with a folksy appeal, and treatments competitive with urban counterparts.

After our quick lunch, Meloto and Limoangco meet with representatives of a French pharmaceutical firm who will collaborate by launching a vaccine at the farm, and so Faure takes over the tour. He says, "I love that my office is a hut surrounded by trees. My day starts by running among the rice fields and then either I do farm tours or meet with the farmers. I try to look for new markets for the products. At the end of the day, maybe I'll play basketball with the farmers or we all play the ukulele. What I love about the Filipinos is that they choose to be happy. I learned that here. The French, they still have to learn that happiness is a choice."

Faure shows us the herb farm, and the mushroom nursery. We also see the schoolhouses where the children learn French and Global Affairs to prepare them to apply for scholarships to business schools in Paris. A longer walk takes us to a hidden swimming pool surrounded by

wild and lush greenery, and more huts built by Shell. "They will build an Aqua Museum here. And again, it is not a doleout. Shell realizes that by partnering with us and creating more prosperity, they are enlarging their market." Hydroponically grown vegetables are in greenhouses near the big eating area. Visitors can purchase the duck eggs and the organic vegetables.

Everyone who comes to the farm asks, "Why did Gawad Kalinga call this place the Enchanted Farm?" Meloto philosophizes, "The original name of this place was Barangay Enkanto, and that can also mean *maligno*, or an evil spirit. But we are taking what is bad and turning it into good. We are making the best for the least. We prefer that the poor remain unseen. Think of the term that we use to describe where they live: the depressed areas. But here, in this kind of environment, where they build their communities and their future, we not only change their homes but their mindset."

And that's not magic or wishful thinking. It's a reality. ■

In the Garden

HERBS THAT PROVIDE JAM-PACKED HEALTH BENEFITS

BY REDILYN DIMAANDAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



Herbs, including basil, parsley, rosemary, lemon grass and lemon balm, benefit your health as much as your taste buds.

HERBS ARE PROBABLY the most popular and intriguing group of plants in existence. They are used in a variety of ways whether to flavor food, perfume homes and dishes, decorate gardens and even heal illnesses. Most herbs have health benefits because they contain disease-fighting antioxidants.

Basil. These highly fragrant leaves are used as a seasoning herb for a variety of foods. Research studies also show that basil is rich in phytonutrients. It grows in warm, tropical climates.

Parsley. There are more than 30 varieties of parsley, but the two most common are

curly-leaf and the more pungent Italian or flat-leaf parsley. This herb is widely used in Middle Eastern, European and American cooking. A sprig of parsley is also popular as a table garnish. Plus, it is also an excellent source of vitamin A and C.

Rosemary. Rosemary flourishes in well-drained, alkaline soil. It prefers a sunny condition and needs shelter from gusty winds. Whether fresh or dried, they are a rich source of minerals like potassium, calcium, iron, manganese, copper and magnesium. Fresh rosemary leaves are a good source of vitamin C, which is required to synthesize collagen in the body.

Lemon grass. Refresh-

ing, citrus-scented lemon grass imparts unique flavor to recipes. Its coarse tufted stems and leaf buds are among the most sought after herbal parts used in an array of cuisines in the South and East Asian regions. Lemon grass has numerous health benefiting essential oils, chemicals, minerals and vitamins with antioxidants and disease-preventing properties.

Lemon balm. Lemon balm is a perennial herb from the mint family. The leaves, which have a mild lemon aroma, are used to make medicine. Many people believe lemon balm has calming effects so they take it for anxiety, sleep problems, and restlessness. ■

Herb-growing tips

- 1 Herbs lend themselves to organic growing. They do not need nor benefit from chemical fertilizers, and many can grow in less than bountiful soils. In general, they do need well-drained soils and a sunny location.
- 2 Don't over-water or over-feed herbs.
- 3 Choose varieties of herbs that work best for your growing conditions, and take advantage of your environment.
- 4 Choose the plants' location and spacing; feedings are also important in the success of your gardening season.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GOURMET FARMS

entertaining



Al Fresco Summer Fete, p. 114

Relaxed and Easy

SUMMER ENTERTAINING
SUGGESTIONS FROM
MARICAR XEREZ-BURGOS

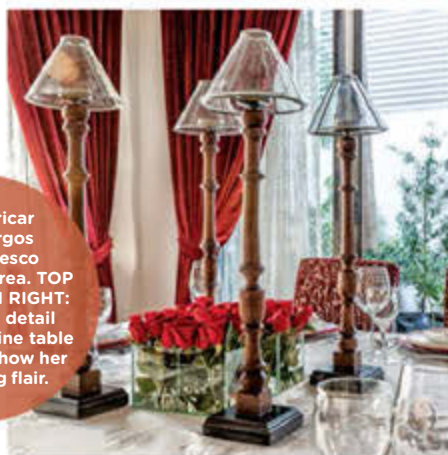
BY BERNICE PALANCA-GO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



LEFT: Maricar Xerez-Burgos in her alfresco entertaining area. TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT: Attention to detail expressed in fine table implements show her entertaining flair.



A long table arranged with white roses set against woven chargers and celadon plates play up a summery vibe.



1. AS HOSTS. We try to find out if our guests prefer fish, chicken, pork or meat. Are some of them vegetarians or have a special diet requirement? Do they like alcohol or is wine okay? If they have a disability, we don't entertain on our 3rd floor roof deck.

2. VENUE. On pizza night I make pizza from scratch and prepare several toppings. On tapas night, there is no main course, just wine and appetizers for six to eight people. On burger night, Alby cooks and grills his special burgers. Our alfresco dining area is the 3rd floor roof deck. We can entertain up to 40 persons buffet style.

3. HOME-COOKED MEALS. I like to prepare my special Caesars Salad Dressing and Grilled Bell Pepper Salad. I get the bell peppers, cherry tomatoes and lettuce from our family's Leisure Farms. I also bake focaccia bread to go with the Chicken Liver Pate and Pesto Dip, which I prepare. The basil is from my garden or from Leisure Farms. For the children, I prepare Baked Spaghetti using

my grandmother's recipe. My gradeschool classmates ask for this during our potluck dinner. For dessert I bake apple pie, and my daughters Cara and Mariana bake banana muffins and chocolate chip cookies.

4. HOME-COOKED ORDERS. I like to order food like pancit molo soup, fresh lumpiang ubod, baked chicken with lemon grass, from my grandmother Carmen Consing la'O, who is from Bacolod and Iloilo. For dessert, I like the chocolate cake of Alby's cousin, Lynette Villareal.

5. TABLE SETTING. I plan my theme depending on the guests. For a big group, I use standard white plates and just change the tablecloth, charger, napkin rings, centerpieces and candles. I also get chairs from my friend Maru de Ocampo, who supplies most events with lots of variety, even Windsor Chairs.

6. FLOWERS. For a small group, I buy flowers and do the arrangements myself; for a big group, I tell my florist what kind of

flower arrangement I like and the flowers to use. I make sure all areas of the house have flowers that go with the theme.

7. GIVEAWAYS. My giveaways are things that I made like focaccia bread, liver pate, muffins or cookies that my kids baked.

8. DRINKS. Alby and I discuss what drink we should pair with what dish, and we try to find out what our guests prefer. Soft drinks are standard, but I try to find out if some prefer a special diet drink. With the appetizer, we serve Cava or Prosecco; with the main course, red and white wine; with dessert, Sauternes or port wine; for after dinner, single malt and liqueur, coffee (Nespresso, regular, decaf or espresso), tea (taraggon and mint leaves from my garden).

9. MUSIC. If it were up to me, I'll always have '80s music. Our daughter Cara uploads Spotify and we just choose. Music is very important because it sets the mood for the evening. ■

Do Stay for the Weekend

YOU'VE SENT OUT
YOUR INVITES!
WHAT COMES NEXT?

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARLENE SY

MS DEMEANOUR: I desperately need your help! You're a perfect hostess, so you're the only one I could turn to.

CAT: Flattery will get you everywhere! What can I do for you?

MS DEMEANOUR: I'm having some friends over at the beach house. Of course, you're the first on my list. This is the first time I'm doing this without anyone else to help out! But aside from providing the meals, what else am I supposed to do?

CAT: The little touches always add up. Make sure you stock the bathrooms with extra towels and toiletries. A carafe of water in the guestroom is also a welcome treat. Do a little research, and stock the room with books and magazines that your guests will enjoy reading. Small pots of flowers are homey and easy to

arrange. Give your guests the freedom to have some private time. It would also be thoughtful to plan some activities, such as a trip to the next town, or a sunset cocktail party. Or board game night!

MS DEMEANOUR: And how many guests would be the best weekend party?

CAT: That would depend on the size of your kitchen to whether you actually enjoy big groups. But six to eight is manageable and fun. And, if a couple has young children, it always helps to bring some toys and books. ■

Gentle Reminders

- 1 Give your guests a mealtime schedule so they can pace themselves.
- 2 Create a balance of group activities and private time for your guests to truly relax.
- 3 When you invite friends, inquire about dietary restrictions and preferences.
- 4 Don't be so bogged down by logistics that you forget to have a good time.





Al fresco summer fête

CELEBRATING MEMORABLE MILESTONES

BY BERNICE PALANCA-GO / PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES

EVENTS, NO MATTER how big or small are reasons for celebration. At Hill Creek, a tranquil sanctuary nestled in Alfonso, Cavite, gatherings are turned into merrymaking. Formerly a family-owned coffee farm, it has since been converted into a wedding venue. The gardens boast of lush landscaping with beautiful flora and fauna that bloom all year round. Undoubtedly, it has transformed into the perfect place for a romantic wedding, prenuptial pictorials, or even a weekend getaway to leave the hustle

and bustle of the city.

The property boasts of a pavilion that can seat up to 300 persons, a garden that can host a wedding party for 500 persons. The Anahaw that can hold more intimate gatherings for up to 70 persons. It even has a salon. We often forget how uncomfortable it is for the bride and the whole entourage doing their makeup in the same room—but not in Hill Creek because they've thought out the arrangement for all this. A quaint chapel is perfect for such an occasion, surrounded as

A charming champagne brunch in the conservatory of Hill Creek Gardens. OPPOSITE PAGE: Entourage members for an upcoming wedding get together and enjoy a champagne brunch in hillcreek gardens. A perfect opportunity to bond before the wedding . It was announced that one of the bridesmaids was soon going to be a bride too. L-R Sabrina Precilla, Jessica Precilla, Leah Puyat, Bibai Gaisano Puyat, Rachelle Que and the cake artist, Joyce Urieta.





it is by pocket gardens and a pond.

We were invited by a bride-to-be for a champagne brunch in one of the greenhouses on the property. It was a pleasant way for her entourage to meet and at the same time catch up on the plans for her upcoming wedding such as cake tasting, giveaway sampling and choosing flowers for the bouquets. A gorgeous set-up and a mouth-watering menu prepared by the resident chef consisting of a beautiful Garden Salad, *Sopa De Ajo*, pasta with chicken and fresh fruits in season, welcomed the guests. The most sumptuous Bijou Cakes in different flavors for the bride and entourage to sample were made for the occasion by Joyce Urieta of The

Delightful Miss Joyce. A spread of chocolate cappuccino, chocolate strawberry, chocolate vanilla, chocolate with salted caramel, lemon blueberry, vanilla berry mélange, coconut lime, raspberry lime, lemon strawberry, red velvet and pistachio and *poquitos* are small Manchego Curado cheesecakes punctuated the spread. Guests even had the choice of taking them home. Accompanying the delectable sweets was a fondant cake with handmade edible flowers, also crafted by Joyce. A pleasant table setting was prepared for the occasion with floral chinaware to match. To cap off the the afternoon, we popped a bottle of champagne, a toast to dreams coming to life! ■

TOP LEFT: A table setting in neutrals is brought to life by a resplendent floral arrangement, which is echoed by the prints of dainty Gien bone china. TOP RIGHT: Joyce Urieta, who bakes by the name The Delightful Miss Joyce, painstakingly crafts and paints by hand the exquisite flowers that adorn her scrumptious cakes.



Sopa De Ajo

(Good for 4)

2 tbsp olive oil
croutons
2 tbsp garlic (minced)
2 tbsp parsley (chopped)
1 liter chicken stock
4 pcs eggs
1 tbsp paprika dulce

1. Heat the olive oil in a pan.
2. Add the garlic until it turns brown.
3. Add the chicken stock then simmer.
4. Add paprika for color and flavor. Adjust the taste by adding salt and pepper in a soup cup.
5. Crack an egg then pour in the soup, topped with croutons and parsley and it's ready to serve. (TIP: Make sure that the egg yolks consistency is runny.)

Chicken Cream Pesto Pasta

(Good for 4)

4 tbsp parmesan cheese (grated)
1/2 kg linguine pasta
1/2 kg chicken breast
1 cup homemade pesto
1 cup chicken stock
3 cups canola oil (cooking oil)
1 tbsp garlic
100 g butter
4 tbsp olive oil
500 ml heavy cream
3 tbsp all purpose flour
1 liter water

For the chicken:

1. Dice the chicken breast into 2cm cubes.

2. Flavor the chicken with salt and pepper then dredge into flour.
3. Fry the chicken until golden brown.

For the pasta:

1. In a pan, boil 1 liter of water add 2 tbsp. olive oil; add salt for flavor.
2. Add the pasta and cook it until *al dente*. Submerge it into an ice bath to stop the cooking.
3. Drain it then drizzle with olive oil.

For the Sauce:

1. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan.
2. Add the butter then sauté the garlic. Before it turns brown, add the pesto.
3. Simmer for 1 minute then add heavy cream.
4. Add the chicken stock.
5. Add flavor with salt and pepper.
6. Combine the pasta until it is covered with pesto sauce. Top with the fried chicken and parmesan cheese, and it is ready to serve.

Waste No More

INSINKERATOR IS AN ECO-FRIENDLY WAY TO DEAL WITH FOOD WASTES

BY ANNA M. ROSETE



ABOVE: Food disposal through the kitchen sink is now possible with InSinkErator. RIGHT: The InSinkErator grinds food wastes so that they go into your home's waste pipe, eliminating food wastes' conversion to toxic waste. FAR RIGHT: The Evolution 200 InSinkErator is the top of the line model, the quietest one, with the most powerful grinding ability.

THE PARTY'S OVER, the guests have gone on their merry way home. Ever the gracious host, you have anticipated preparing more party fare than usual, so after all the festivities, you find yourself with lots of leftovers. Those that can be reheated and stored for the next day, you have naturally sent home in neat packages with your guests. After all, they have all come for a taste of your famous signature dishes, and wouldn't mind having another taste of them at home.

All this said, you are still left with a pile of dishes on the sink. Whether you are handwashing your delicate crockery or entrusting them to your efficient dishwasher, the problem of what to do with the leftover fruit peels, bones, and other food wastes persists. Surely, dumping them into your kitchen sink is not the solution. This will clog your pipes and eventually present you with more trouble. Conversely, throwing them into the trash may temporarily solve the problem, but it will persist in the long run, contributing to

the environmental conundrum of methane, an environmentally toxic gas twenty-one times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Thankfully, there is a solution to food waste disposal in the InSinkErator, a food disposal system which deals with food scraps effectively and instantly. Turn it on with a push button or switch, and it proceeds to grind your food waste into tiny particles that go into the waste pipe. The substances then go into

a wastewater treatment plant or septic system. Hence, this technology treats food waste in an environmentally responsible manner, eliminating the route to landfills and its conversion there into toxic greenhouse gases that harm the environment.

The InSinkErator system contributes to your home's overall hygiene as it is a tried-and-true solution to foul odors emanating from food waste spoilage in the trash. ■



Eco-Friendly Benefits of the InSinkErator

- 1 The InSinkErator is an ecologically responsible solution to dealing with food wastes than landfills.
- 2 It helps reduce greenhouse gases.
- 3 Properly disposed and treated food wastes are turned into power by many water waste treatment plants.
- 4 Biosolids culled from waste water treatment plants are turned into fertilizers used by farmers, golf courses and home gardeners.

For more information on InSinkErator, visit Focus Global, Pioneer corner Reliance Streets, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines; tel. no. (+632) 634-858, fax no. (+632) 634-8738.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF FOCUS GLOBAL, INC.

Folk Impressive

BEACH HOMES AND FOLK ART ARE TOPS ON MY COVET-LIST

BY ANA ROCHA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAR CONCENCO



WHEN ONE THINKS of vacation homes, it is generally filled with visions of relaxation hand in hand with recreation. My vacation home is one by the beach where I can hear the sound of crashing waves and pick organic objects on the shore to complete various vignettes at home.

Another staple amongst found objects are various baskets and handicrafts bought from artisans in small villages both here and abroad. I am always impressed by the artistry of townsfolk using indigenous

materials and transforming them into practical works of art. I am a fan of the woven box/chest, handmade trays and the like. I was impressed by this beautiful box with exquisite brass details, the intricacies of the weaving juxtaposed with the hand tooled brass details. This beautiful basket box was elevated to a luxe level by the sheer combination of materials that the artisans employed in its design. Fill your homes with items lovingly made by hand. As for me, I covet them all. ■

A handmade multiweave trinket box with brass details as accent. These types of boxes are found in craft markets in Korea.





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3, Makati. Tel. 818-8811 and 403-3062; **Pottery Barn**, Central Square, Bonifacio High St., 30th Street cor 5th Ave. Tel. 950-8187. Website: www.potterybarn.com; **Prizmic & Brill**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, Legazpi Street, Legazpi Village, Makati. Website: www.prizmicbrill.com. **Rustan's**, Ayala Ave, Makati. Tel. 813-3739. Email: inquiry@rustans.com.ph. Website: www.rustans.com.ph. **Sifra Interiors & Objects**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, 3/F, Home Zone Glorietta 4, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia Bel-Air 2, Makati. Tel. 501-3220/ 752-7174. Email: sifra.interiors@yahoo.com; **Townes, Inc.**, Townes Building 916 Arnaiz Ave., Makati. Tel. 844-1338, 844-5086, 813-8588. Email: inquiry@townes.com.ph. Website: www.townes.com.ph.

nesting

In the following pages, **Metro Home & Entertaining** takes you to Zambawood, a resort made by a mother for her son.





HEALING HAVEN

ZAMBAWOOD IN SAN NARCISO, ZAMBALES IS A BEAUTIFUL TESTAMENT TO THE POWERFUL BOND BETWEEN MOTHER AND CHILD.

BY ANNA M. ROSETE / PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAR CONCENGCO



Zambawood, a resort in San Narciso, Zambales, was built by Rachelle Harrison as a love letter to her son.



WHEN THE METRO HOME TEAM arrives in Zambawood, twilight is just a few minutes away. As with most traditional provincial summers spent on the beach, the sounds of the waves will crash on the shore for a concerto that will lull us to sleep by bedtime. Rachelle Harrison, our hostess for the evening and owner of the resort, greets us warmly. She takes us across her property, shaded from tropical storm surges by rows of local conifers, through the most charming of rustic man-made bridges, and finally to her makeshift cabana overlooking the beach and the scenic Capones and Camara Islands.

The vista calls to mind many local film and *teleserye* heroes and heroines who have basked in the same sunset. “There’s a reason why movies are made here,” the tagline of Zambawood goes, and indeed, as we watch the sunset, we understand fully the desire to spin stories in such a setting. For what

brought us here is a true story as compelling as anyone with a heart will fathom.

Coming Home

“Growing up, San Narciso was a small, quaint town, where you know everyone. There were plenty of trees, and we had an orchard. We climbed the *aratis* tree, picked the fruits and divided the harvest amongst ourselves,” Rachelle describes the little town in Zambales where she has built Zambawood, her version of Eden for her child, Julyan, who was diagnosed with autism at the age of 2. When he turned 18, Rachelle sought to build something for Julyan that will allow him to live freely and joyfully. This place of healing is her love letter to him.

Coming back to San Narciso after thirty years of living abroad was the farthest thing from Rachelle’s mind. An architect by education, she was a flight attendant for Cathay

Warm wood is juxtaposed with concrete in Zambawood. Vibrant textiles from Rachelle's travels through various parts of the world liven up the color palette. Also a painter, a collection of Rachelle's own paintings are displayed. Above the television, her painting is framed alongside her British husband's, depicting landscapes that are unique to their respective histories. Hers, a figure in a *salakot* staring into the beach, and his, a landscape of rambling greenery. All furnishings were brought back from her old homes with the exception of the sofa, which she designed and executed by Christopher "Paris" Lacson, who also coined the tagline for the resort.





TOP: A door leads to a pathway to the beach. ABOVE: An al fresco table setting has the best views of the conifers and the ocean as well as a massage hut within the property. LEFT: The beach beckons in Zambawood, but first, a jaunt along tall *aguho* pine trees before you get there.



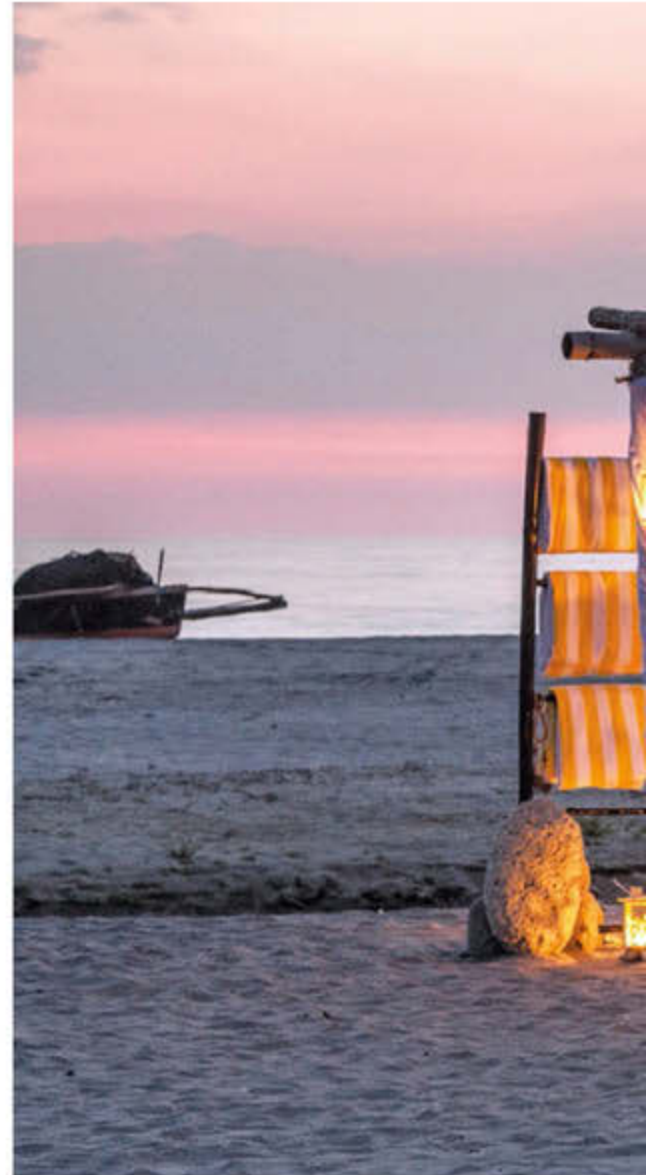
From sunset to sunrise, Zambawood is a respite whose centerpiece is Julyan (in photo below, with mom, Rachelle). Julyan's Pine Beach Farm is across from Zambawood, where free range chickens roam, and a variety of vegetables are grown.

Pacific Airlines' first class cabins. After her marriage to a supportive British banker, she lived in Hong Kong, Singapore and Geneva. Currently, she commutes from Singapore to Manila monthly, to see that the affairs in Zambawood are running smoothly, and to be with Julyan.

"I told my family, 'I'm not coming back,'" she shares about the first time she left the Philippines. "*Yun pala* Julyan's purpose in my life... was to bring me back to San Narciso, and now, I'm doing all these things. I'd like to eventually create an artist community here, like Ubud, in Bali," Rachelle says. This mother shows her indomitable spirit as she talks about her journey with Julyan and Zambawood, one that is marked by a fiery passion to see her son flourish.

"My fear is that Julyan will not have anyone when I go. There comes a point in life where you really need to think of ways where [your children] become more independent," Rachelle says. "At the end of the day, one just needs a job to sustain oneself. Julyan is physically able, but mentally, he is not there. So I thought, 'Why not farming? Why not art?'" Rachelle explains. "Do not underestimate children with special needs because if you push them, they will succeed," she declares.

With this motivation, she proceeded to build Zambawood, a four-bedroom resort in San Narciso, Zambales. Right across from it is Julyan's Farm, an organic plantation where she cultivates "all the vegetables in *Bahay Kubo*." Along with these are healthy free range chickens on a diet of lemongrass and *guyabano* water, making them a hit with her friends from Manila. "I've had so many orders, people are on a waiting list," she says.

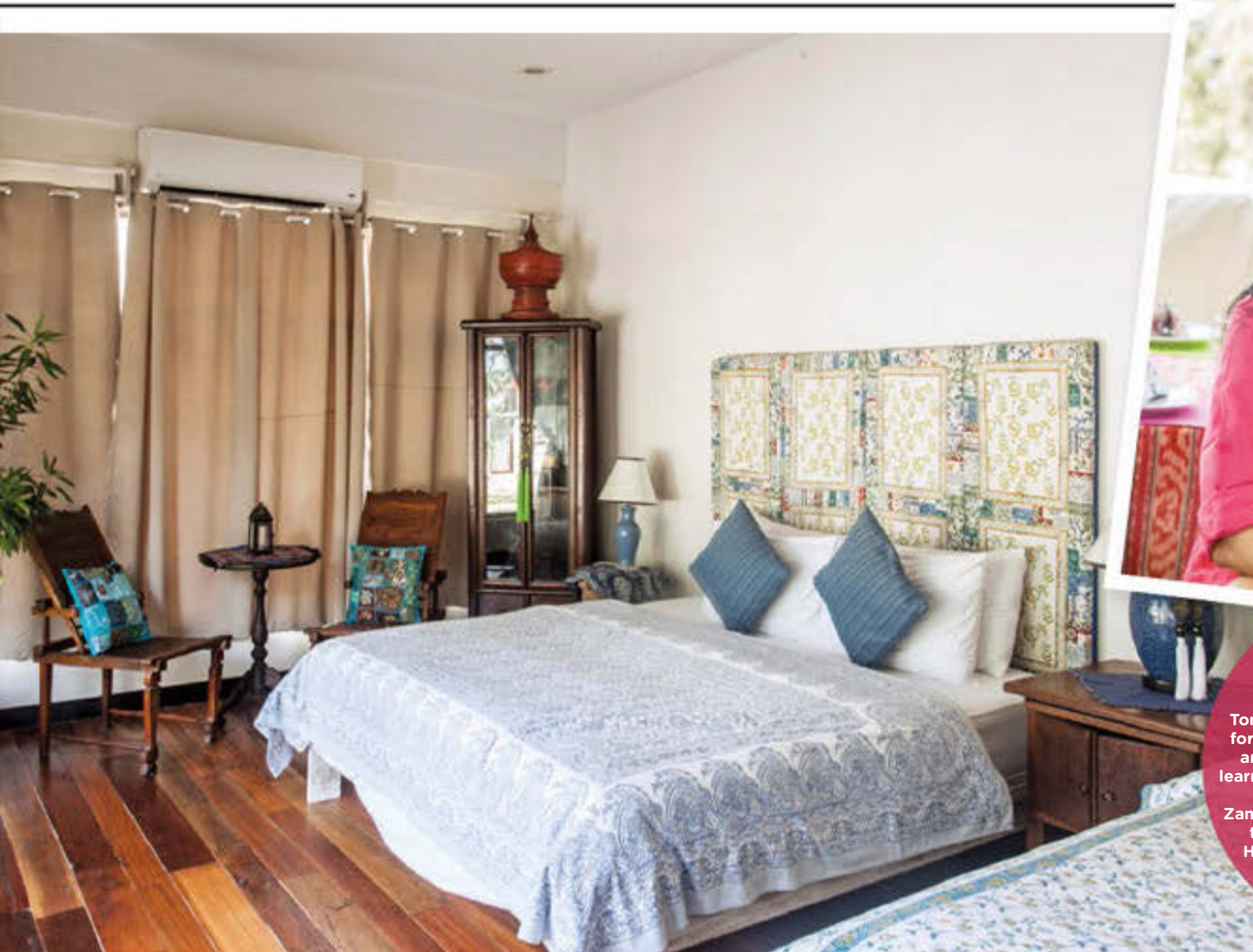


**CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP:** A cabana
welcomes guests to
Zambawood during cocktail
hour. Visitors can watch the
sultry sunset in this setting. Wine,
cheese and nuts are served. In
the evening, a delectable spread
consisting of the local catch of
the day from the fish market
and vegetables make up the
meal. A rustic welcome to
Julyan's Farm awaits
guests.



In Zambawood, the al fresco table setting bursts with prints and patterns of all colors. Various ethnic textiles, from *ikat* to hand blocked are used to adorn the table. Overhead, paper star lanterns hang from whitewashed runo.





Rachelle Harrison, the force behind Zambawood, is an architect by education, who earned her degree at the University of Sto. Tomas. She became a flight attendant for Cathay Pacific's First Class cabins, and applies the hospitality that she learned from this career to Zambawood. LEFT: One of the bedrooms in Zambawood has a blue and white color theme, perfect for beach setting. Hand blocked placemats collected from the owner's travels were sewn together to create the headboard.

The resort sustains the farm, and it is in the farm and the resort's surroundings where Julyan is free to explore, learn, express and be guided by caregivers.

"When I came back, I found that the cultural belief is that the children with special needs will just stay home. The parents cannot let go. I respect that, but they need to realize that the kids will have more fun in an environment tailored for them. In a way, I am offering respite to the families of special needs children," Rachelle points out.

In developing a community for special needs children in the future, Rachelle consults with Dr. Malanta, who is her "lead in finding out who else needs to be in this environment." She hopes that in the future, she can bring this empowering model of caring for special needs children to other parts of the Philippines.

Cross-cultural sonata

The resort is a symphony composed from all the travels and the places Rachelle has visited in her lifetime. It took her two years to build the property, where the infrastructure was first constructed, and then the

home. "Initially, the four rooms were going to be all different: Indian, Balinese, South African and Moroccan," but eventually, they morphed into a style that is distinctly Rachelle's own, marked by her personal flair for decorating.

Giving us a tour of the home, she explains that she used concrete for the floors, juxtaposed with tiles in the foyer. The walls share a similar concrete wash, but in a different color. She used salvaged wood. Particularly striking is the kitchen island, a solid piece of hardwood that she reclaimed from her mother's backyard during a strong typhoon. For the bathrooms, the wood-and-concrete contrasts prevail, highlighted with tiles from India. Delicate bamboo lean-tos made in the premises serve as hangers for towels and toilet paper. "You don't have to spend the earth to have style," Rachelle says.

Life is in the details

Her flair for entertaining is palpable in the meals she serves in Zambawood. "I love to entertain. I enjoy table settings that are not the usual. You don't have to buy a whole bouquet. You can make one or make do with what

you have. You just have to style the arrangement in a way that pleases you... Entertaining comes naturally so that this resort business is a breeze, but having said that, you can't please everyone," she says, while draping long, colorful table runners, with frangipanis dancing in a bowl of water as a centerpiece.

This zeal for detail extends from table setting to every detail in Zambawood. "I trained my staff to be service-oriented. They are all graduates of the Ramon Mag-saysay Memorial College, with degrees in Hospitality and Restaurant Management," she says proudly.

"I'm 53. When you're 50, you look back at what you were enjoying doing at the age of 7 or 8. I was always drawing clothes and houses," Rachelle fondly recalls. "I give it my all. I'm a Virgo. I kind of get obsessed. I have always been passionate. When I talk to people, I give them the moment. I love details. Life is in the details. That's how I enjoy it. When you give love and passion, the details are what matters," Rachelle tells us, speaking as a mother whose mission is to ensure her son's well-being, a veritable beacon for others who are in a similar situation. ■



*“Love is overwhelming. When you’re giving thanks, you feel it.”
—Rachel Harrison, owner of Zambawood and mother.*